

# ARKANGEL

ISSUE 29

## THE CUTTING EDGE

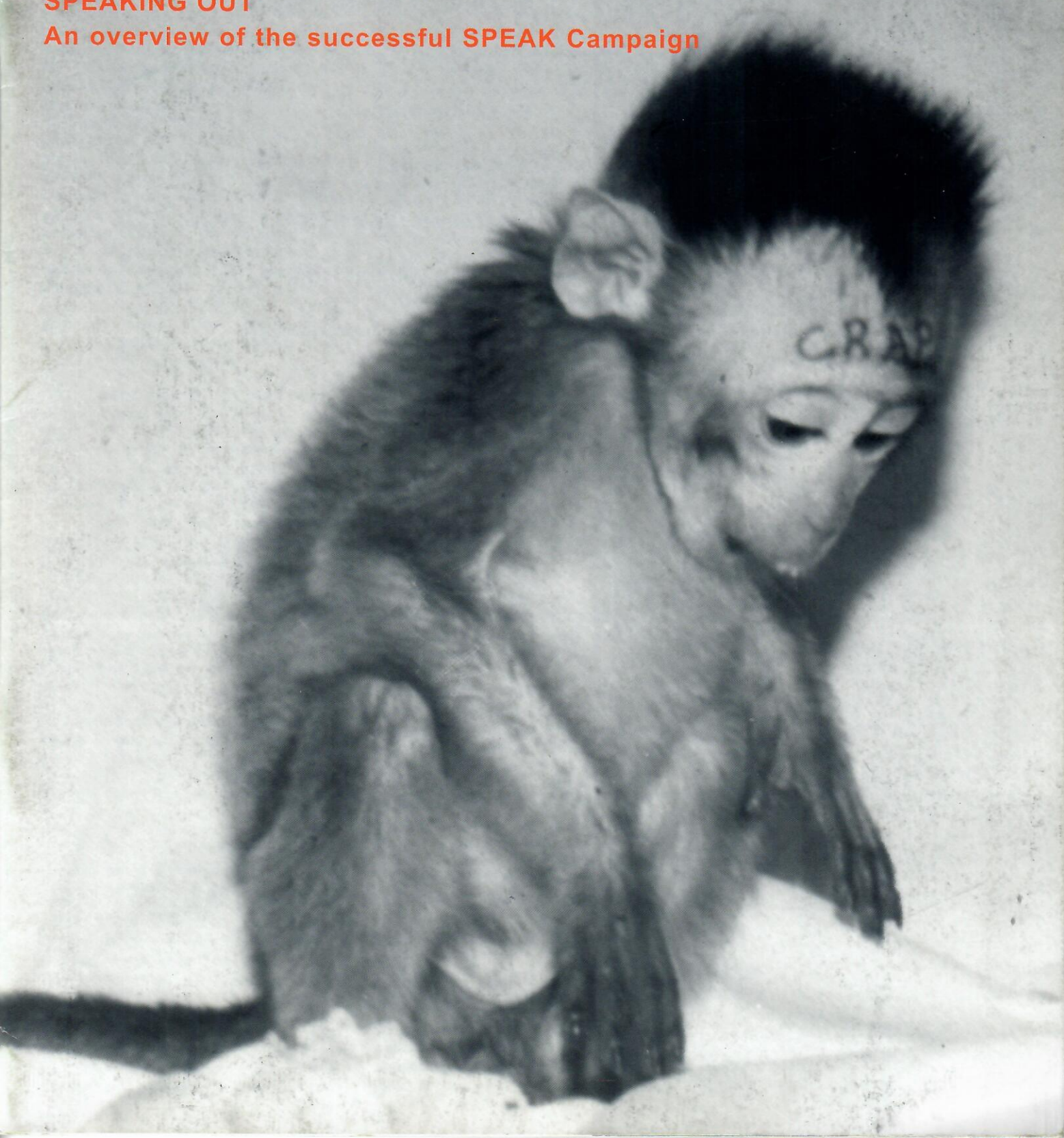
An interview with surgeon Jerry Vlasak

## MAKING WAVES

Mel Broughton on the tide of change

## SPEAKING OUT

An overview of the successful SPEAK Campaign







The Arkangel editorial team apologise to readers for the long delay in the publication of issue 29; we hope the wait has been worthwhile. As always, we would like to thank all those who have contributed articles and/or given their time to help put the magazine together.

*Found among documents removed from RCS during a SEALL raid, the cover photograph shows a young monkey with the word "crap" tattooed across her forehead. Researchers presumably found the humiliation of their victim a source of amusement; this is not uncommon in the laboratory and is a part of the desensitising process which takes place where a living being is rendered an object in the eyes of abusers, enabling them to torture/kill their victim without guilt or remorse.*

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arkangelweb@hotmail.com or  
ARKANGEL magazine  
BCM 9240  
LONDON WC1 3XX





# The Puppet Masters

## Editorial

If ever we needed evidence that those with vested interests in animal abuse fear us, we have only to look at recent developments in the UK. As we go to press, the campaign to halt a vivisection laboratory build in Oxford continues to gather momentum. The success of the campaign to stop construction of a similar laboratory in Cambridge earlier this year has fuelled the opposition's determination to prevent a repeat performance on the Oxford stage and their attempts to match its impact with a liberal use of smear and propaganda. Not satisfied with trying to discredit the movement, they have introduced a further crackdown to limit the right to protest, and tightened up police powers of arrest to prevent the "terror threat" of animal rights campaigners – or more accurately, to prevent them disseminating the truth. Their activities tend to make one think of bad losers in the kindergarten.

We suggested in the last *Arkangel* that the UK's unsolicited involvement in the Iraq war and the wider "War against terror" was likely to have implications for pressure groups opposing the status quo in this country. This has certainly been brought to bear if we are to judge by the government's anti animal rights hysteria. With the IRA 'terror threat' off the agenda – at least for the time being – the government are adopting an increasingly 'zero tolerance' stance against those they consider a domestic 'terror' threat. The animal rights movement has been voted the new Public Enemy Number One for daring to question the fundamental morality of our social infrastructure and the financial power base on which it is built.

This power base is embodied by the pharmaceutical/biochemical multinationals who play a huge role in the world economy and whose very existence depends on the continuation of animal abuse. Their far-reaching influence has governments dancing to the beat of their profit drum, and has a virtual monopoly on drug licensing, manufacture and distribution. The discrediting of alternatives as well as the hijacking process of centuries-old alternative remedies and their enforced licensing are symptomatic of the power they wield. Marketed by small companies that simply do not have the financial resources to pay for the licensing of such remedies, the latter fall into the laps of the pharmaceutical companies who either shelve them or commandeer them for the development of composite drugs produced in the laboratory, thus eradicating potential competition by denying the public access to, and choice in, using the purer version.

Control, power and monopoly - these are behind their witch-hunt and their stooge government's crackdown against animal rights campaigners who are challenging that monopoly and the ethics on which it is founded.

The opposition's tactics have been predictable: false allegations, misrepresentation, and liberal use of the word 'terrorist' in a climate where people have been made to feel fear because of real acts of terror. There is nothing innovative about such diversionary tactics; they are used the world over when it is politically expedient to divert attention from issues for which there is popular sympathy.

Yet government measures are likely to be counter-productive. They show a poor understanding of the human spirit, which will always resist constraints that limit freedoms. The British public don't take kindly to being spoon-fed lies and are no longer taken in by government spin – they weren't taken in by the lies over Iraq's 'invisible threat', and they're not taken in by the most recent allegations about the animal rights movement as the new 'invisible threat'. The public can distinguish between true terrorism and the tactics of the animal rights movement; they know there is a world of difference between the latter and the indiscriminate nature of global terror both of terror groups and governments.

In a constant bid to win people over in the popularity stakes, the government has been characterised by its knee-jerk reactions to problem solving, instead of a sensible analysis of available facts. They have demonstrated a real inability to understand the prevailing mood of its electorate and have frequently miscalculated support for their schemes. Their spin – of which there is an abundance – is a game of chance, as unpredictable as roulette. Sooner or later, the tables turn; sooner or later, their mistakes revisit them. Having sold out to the multinationals, and in declaring that they are backing vivisection to save lives, the government are hoping that the electorate will forget that it is under Labour's term in office that the National Health System has been eroded; instead of rebuilding it, they are piling money into protecting and supporting the pharmaceuticals. But the electorate have not forgotten.

Attempts by the opposition to isolate, discredit, marginalize, disempower and silence us have resulted in an upsurge in support out on the streets and that is where we know we're winning people over, slowly but surely. The exposure through the media has given us the opportunity to be heard for the first time in years. With all their power and influence, the opposition are losing the war of words. The public are beginning to listen not just to the facts about animal abuse but also to the disclosures about bad science.

The latest developments in new government measures show Labour in full anti-democracy swing, so removed from their origins of 'The Party of The People' that we would be hard pushed to distinguish them from the far right. Home Office minister Blunkett denied several US citizens entry into the UK to prevent them from attending the peaceful annual animal rights gathering held at the Farm Animal Sanctuary in Kent. This is a clear infringement on human rights and free speech.

It has often been argued that the struggle for animal rights is indivisible from the struggle for human rights; this is an unassailable truth. Of course, the trouble is that if we become sucked into a long drawn out struggle to fight our own corners, we will be playing right into the hands of the opposition. Forced to dilute our efforts in the struggle for animal liberation in order to protect our own backs, we are made less effective in the cause we champion. This is a road we must refuse to be drawn along. We must refuse to play by their rules.

We must watch our backs, certainly, but we must also continue undeterred along the road we have chosen, regardless of the methods the opposition use to silence us. And we **are** being effective - the backlash against the movement is proof of that. With a bounty on our proverbial heads offered by the City to stop us hurting their pockets, you have to wonder how bad is the itch they can't scratch? Whatever is going on behind closed doors, we **know** we've scratched at more than the surface. We must take heart from what we have already achieved. We know that we can and will achieve a great deal more. If there are casualties in this war of words and tactics – as we know all too well there have been - it's a price we must be prepared to pay for speaking out for Truth.





Jerry Vlasak with wife Pamela

# THE CUTTING EDGE

*Busy trauma surgeon Jerry Vlasak answers his critics in this frank interview with Arkangel, discussing his early involvement in the movement, his thoughts on medical research from a surgeon's perspective, direct action and how he views his role in the bigger picture.*

**A.** Jerry – hi. Firstly, thanks for finding the time to do this interview. Like other animal rights campaigners interviewed by Arkangel, you've had a very varied life. You are latterly very much involved in animal rights, including your duties as spokesperson for the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine in the United States, your role in the international campaign against

Huntingdon Life Sciences, and your involvement as an activist for Sea Shepherd. To cap it all, you are also a physician working in the field of trauma surgery. Quite a minefield of questions to wade through here, so let's start at the beginning: how did you arrive at this point? What moment – if any – was pivotal in your awakening?

**JV.** In 1992 I was engaged in a busy surgical practice, having finished my training only 2 years earlier. I was already becoming incensed with the idea that most of my patients needed surgical intervention because of what they ate; I was removing gallbladders almost daily for gallstones, performing mastectomies and colectomies because of breast and colon cancers, and doing femoral-popliteal bypass because of clogged arteries known to be caused by a meat-based diet high in fat and cholesterol.

About this time, my wife Pamela and I took a few days to drive up the California coast, and she asked me to read two books she had brought along. I started on 'Diet for a New America' by John Robbins, and as he told of the animal cruelty and environmental devastation inherent in eating each farmed animal, I literally had an awakening and at the end of each of the chapters I swore off eating that particular animal. By the end of the book, I was vegan and had an entirely different outlook on the world. I felt like I had been blind my whole life and now I could see, even though what I was 'seeing' with my new sight was terribly painful and disturbing to me emotionally. That same week I went on to read 'The Struggle for Animal Rights' by Tom Regan, and after I finished his book, I knew my life would never be the same again.

**A.** Earlier in your career, you were an animal researcher. This has equipped you with an insider knowledge of what goes on behind laboratory doors and the ammunition to challenge the scientific community; you are quoted as saying that "without equivocation...testing on animals is wholly and completely unnecessary." Could you elaborate on this?

**JV.** I chose on my own accord to do animal research because, like most surgical residents, I was brainwashed into thinking that it was important in helping patients and it would look good on my resume if I was the author of published articles having to do with animal research. I was never told verbally that I had to experiment on animals, but I was a product of the 'culture' of a high-powered residency program and never questioned the legitimacy of animal research; I was looking only to further my career in the surgical field.



I spent a year operating on dogs and rabbits, dozens dying at my hands I am sure. My research assignment was to create hardening of the arteries in an animal model so we could practice getting rid of it. This hardening of the arteries, or atherosclerosis, is responsible for the death and disability of the majority of Westerners, and is 100% preventable by eating a plant-based diet and getting moderate exercise. Nevertheless, I spent a year killing dogs, gathered huge amounts of data, published 14 papers in the medical journals, and at the end of the day was no closer to giving clogged arteries to dogs than when I started. And of course, I accomplished nothing to improve the health of my patients. To the best of my knowledge, no one has ever found a way to give dogs atherosclerosis to this day. Dogs are natural carnivores, and as such their bodies are made to process animal fat and cholesterol and it doesn't make them sick. Humans always get sick if they eat a diet like this because we are not natural carnivores.

By the end of my year of doing research, my mind was beginning to change. Like others doing the same, I had generated tons of data, published lots of papers, and furthered my academic career, but I wasn't helping human patients, and I was using research dollars that could have been spent in better ways elsewhere. Later I found out that 80% of all data gathered in animal experiments is discarded, never even published. It's a terribly inefficient way to attempt to gather information, it wastes vast amounts of money (most of it taxpayers' money) and it kills millions of animals, as well as making one hardened to another beings pain and suffering. There are so much better ways of researching human diseases, such as clinical and epidemiologic studies, the use of cell cultures, micro arrays, computed tomography, MRI, PET scans, autopsies and many others.

**A.** Most of us have gone through some sort of process of life evaluation before entering the movement, discarding old thoughts and indoctrination which view animal exploitation as acceptable and the norm. In practical terms, how difficult was it for you to reject the principles you had

been taught to believe were 'good science'? When you were a researcher, did you experience the sort of desensitisation that appears to be common amongst individuals in all walks of life who exploit animals?

**“ I had generated tons of data, published lots of papers, and furthered my academic career, but I wasn't helping human patients, and I was using research dollars that could have been spent in better ways elsewhere. ”**

I actually made the changes rather suddenly and quickly. I wasn't obsessed with moving up the ladder professionally and monetarily. I just basically wanted to help my patients. So, when I saw the evidence out there that factory farming is devastating to animals, the environment, and human health, I just wanted no part of it. The vivisection issue was similar; I had long had the suspicion that it wasn't the magic bullet like everyone pretended it was; while in the lab the whole thing seemed to be a political, social, and

career game with drug companies taking my wife and I out to fancy dinners and paying for hotel rooms and travel to meetings.

Even though I had grown up with dogs in the household, and would always have protested I was an animal lover, I just gave no thought whatsoever to experimenting on them in the lab. It's what doctors DID, why should I question it? The lab I was working in had even been hit by the ALF in the early 1980s, and we were told that the lab "had been broken into by animal rights nuts and dogs were stolen" and to be sure all the doors were kept locked. I dismissed the idea that there were legitimate concerns with the necessity or ethics concerning what I was doing.

That said, though I am all for trying to enlighten those in the vivisection business, I feel no sympathy for them, and think they must be stopped. I wish someone had brought the issue up for discussion with me much sooner, because I would hope that I would have listened and thought about it, and changed. But if that weren't effective, they would have been justified in stopping my work by other means.

**A.** Do you believe that any useful data whatsoever has been extrapolated from vivisection in your area of surgery, given that you believe testing on animals is completely unnecessary?

**JV.** I can't say nothing useful has ever come out of experimenting on animals. However, that same information could have been discovered other ways, perhaps even sooner and the vast amount of money wasted on animal research would have produced far more useful data for human health if it had been directed towards legitimate non-animal research projects.

**A.** The horrific experiments conducted by Nazis on concentration camp internees (Chemical giants of the time like IG Farben considered paying Auschwitz 200 marks per prisoner excessive and were eventually sold 150 "test objects" at the knock-down price of 170 marks each.



All 150 women died) are universally condemned as morally insupportable, yet scientists since the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War have not only reaped the benefits of that knowledge, but routinely use human models in clinical drug trials. Volunteers – often in the third world countries - are often misinformed and duped into taking part in experimental treatments, with fatal or devastating results. How insidious is this particular brand of amorality within the research establishment, and do you believe there are those scientists who quite simply have no moral boundaries? Indeed, would you say that there is evidence of a sadistic strain amongst such individuals?

**JV.** I think most humans have a sadistic strain, evidenced by the way they treat each other, not to mention non-human animals and the environment. The same ability to torture and kill concentration camp prisoners allows humans to continue torturing and killing animals today. Today racism, sexism and other human prejudices are more closely examined, and laws protect various human groups against further atrocities. A hundred and fifty years ago here in the US, it was perfectly acceptable to own other humans and treat them any way one pleased, including conducting medical experiments on them. Today, the same situation exists for those of the non-human species; speciesism has not risen to the level of recognition that other prejudices have. Our job is to change that.

**A.** Is your personal standpoint against vivisection centred around the moral or the scientific arguments, or do you believe both to be of equal importance?

**JV.** Moral arguments are by far the most important to me personally; otherwise, someone can always look for a scientifically valid reason to violate the rights of others. The Nazi experiments you referred to earlier are a good example; a lot of useful information came out of them, they were scientifically valid, but immoral. In the case of animal experimentation though, the vast majority of research is scientifically invalid, as well as 100% immoral.

**A.** What level of support is there within the medical community for what the Committee is trying to achieve? Do you believe that there is an increasing acceptance for the views you propagate or is there a huge resistance from the status quo? For example, over 50% less animals are used to train medical students in the US today than in the past – do you believe this to be a direct result of external pressure by campaigners or the direct evolution of advances in the provision of realistic models?

The use of animals in medical education is nearing its end; it's costly, it doesn't work, and many students are ethically opposed to it. The decrease in animal use in medical education has been mostly student-led, with PCRM providing support and guidance on how to make the changes necessary to replace the old animal models with modern, more accurate, and humane non-animal ones.

Direct pressure from campaigners is an important impetus in change, and must be continually encouraged and promoted. Most significant changes come about by



Jerry Vlasak in surgery

**JV.** There is a growing awareness of not only the scientific unreliability of animal research, but also of the ethical issues. Currently there are more than 5000 US physicians who support Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, and our belief that animals should not be used in laboratories or in education. Those who are resisting generally fall into three categories: those making money off animal use, those who make their careers off animal use, or those who, like me years ago, are so used to the idea it just doesn't occur to them that there are ethical and scientific issues to be considered.

those with a vision of a better way and a concrete strategy that doesn't let up. It just so happens the science behind medical research bolsters our position. Logically, with both the science and the ethics behind us, it should be much easier to end the atrocities of animal exploitation in laboratories, but unfortunately money, power and tradition still prevail.

The numbers of animals being killed in 'medical education' is going down. This is primarily due to the efforts of groups like PCRM, the tenacity of the animal rights campaigners and alternatives like simulators and computer modelling.



However, simulators would not have become as popular if the AR movement hadn't demanded through campaigns, including direct action, the end to the use of animals in medical education.

It is getting more difficult for vivisectors to imprison, torture and kill other primates with impunity, even though scientifically it should be more likely to be valid scientifically. There is still a lot of work to be done to get the issue considered more seriously though, and extend the ethics to animals besides the ones that look like us humans or are furry and cute.

**A.** You have been involved for some time with the SHAC campaign – what has been your specific role in this and what do you believe has been achieved by the international pressure applied on this multinational? Do you believe victory against this company to be on the horizon?

**JV.** The SHAC campaign is a model for activism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and is based on proven results. As a scientifically minded person, I look at what works, and try to concentrate my efforts on those methods. That's why I work with SHAC, SPEAK, Sea Shepherd Conservation Society and PCRM, all of whom are making significant advances against animal abusers.

For SHAC, I have tried to lend some scientific and medical credibility to the campaign because, as a surgeon and a previous vivisector, I can bring my experiences to the campaign and certainly speak on the fraudulence, immorality and waste of money of vivisection. At the same time, I believe that direct action against abusers who will bow to nothing less, appears to be effective. Huntington Laboratories commit some of the most cruel, horrific forms of torture on non-human animals that exist in the world today. They make a lot of money doing it, and will never consider changing their ways unless forced to do so. In much the same way that Consort Kennels and Hillgrove Cat Farm were forced to stop breeding and selling animals to die horrible deaths in laboratories, HLS will be stopped from murdering 500 animals every single day in their labs. They will

stop not because they abhor the suffering or because they realize the fallacious nature of using animals in these experiments, but because they cannot afford to continue business as usual and are afraid for their own personal safety. I really don't care why they stop; just so they stop. And they will!

**A.** Could you tell us a little about the kind of work you have done with Sea Shepherd and how you first became involved with them?

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**“ The liberation  
of animals IS  
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**JV.** I had met the founder of Sea Shepherd, Captain Paul Watson, and was impressed with the organizations accomplishments and tactics. Later, I became good friends with another outstanding activist, Allison Lance, who subsequently married Captain Watson. We all became friends, and I was given the opportunity to serve onboard ship, and later asked to help steer the organization as a board member.

I have been on campaigns in the Faroe Islands, Galapagos and Costa Rica, and seen firsthand what can be accomplished by a small group of committed activists. Like the UK activists, Sea Shepherd

volunteers are fearless, and I think we need more fearless people in the animal liberation movement; people not afraid to lose their personal belongings, their freedom, even their lives. I frequently look for my inspiration to UK activists, who as a whole are willing to risk much more than the generally more self-centred, materialistic Americans.\_

**A.** Much of SHAC's campaign revolves around direct action, as do the activities of Sea Shepherd; given your close links with both groups, you are clearly a supporter of direct action. How important do you believe the role of direct action to be in the furthering of the animal rights cause?

**JV.** Whilst I think there are roles to be played by petitioning governments and the courts, as well as educating children and other members of the public, I really think the most efficient way to bring about change beneficial for animals and their environment is through direct action. Along with the direct benefits of direct action come additional benefits of education through the press and media, as well as legal and political changes as governments seek to respond to the effects of the actions.

Of course, not all media and governmental responses are helpful! But like with all social progress made over the ages, you don't feel the chains until you begin to move.

**A.** What are your hopes and fears for the future of the animal rights movement? Do you believe that total animal liberation is possible?

**JV.** My fear is that the fight for animal liberation will not continue to progress, will not look at what is strategically the most effective in achieving our goals, or will be afraid of tactics new to the movement or those tactics that escalate the fight. My hope, on the other hand, is that we will recruit more and more warriors for the animals, warriors who will not let fear keep them from doing what needs to be done. The liberation of animals IS possible, but will take an interminable amount of time unless we keep up the pressures on those who profit from animal abuse.



# FAHRENHEIT 451

## *The temperature's rising*

*I am a citizen of the world. I am not shaped by governments or dictated to by priests. I do not let them define who I am or what I say. I believe that one day, those who do not yet share our views will stand alongside us. I believe that direct action is a necessary part of that wake up call and that it will always be a part of this or any other liberation struggle.*

*I have seen behind the walls of laboratories, behind the walls of factory farms and slaughterhouses. I have lived with many liberated animals. I have lived with them through their nightmares and their fears. I have known their joy and I have known their pain. I have watched dogs urinate in fear at the sight of a white-coated man, watched them cower for weeks under a bed after their liberation, but I have also seen them look at the first fall of snow after a life in laboratory cages and take their first faltering steps into an ocean under the full moon. I have seen laboratory rats, hamsters, gerbils, mice, rabbits take care of their dying, seen them explore new foods and natural environments after a diet of pellets and a life in plastic boxes less than 12 x 9 inches. I have watched them live full and happy lives way beyond their expected life spans, and I have watched them develop trust in the species that maligns them and reviles them as vermin. They are all long since dead. As I write, I am looking at the photograph of two liberated beagles. When I look at that image, I remember the light and love they brought into my life. I will always remember their pain. I KNOW that what I stand for is right, and I am not ashamed to say it. If that makes me a criminal, then I am proud to be a criminal. I am the face behind the mask.*

Originally published in 1953, Ray Bradbury's thought-provoking book *Fahrenheit 451* (the title refers to the temperature at which paper ignites) is usually classified as a work of science fiction, but it is first and foremost a social criticism that warns against the danger of suppressing thought through censorship and the irreparable damage that any oppressive government, left unchecked, can do to society by limiting the creativity and freedom of its people. The dystopia motif used in books and films of this genre, which portray a futuristic technocratic totalitarian society that demands order and harmony at the expense of individual rights, is one that will resonate for many of us.

That influential social criticisms such as Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* were published just a few years prior to *Fahrenheit 451* is not coincidental. They revealed disquiet over the intellectually oppressive post-WWII political climate of the early 1950s during the McCarthy era in the US. That climate is now on the upsurge once again in post-9/11 paranoia, replacing the scare-mongering propaganda of the Cold War with the onslaught on minority groups that challenge the status quo. The resurgence in this attitude has undoubtedly crossed the Atlantic and infected the UK; their agenda is clearly to crush any resistance that challenges their power base. The most popular way of doing that at the moment is to play on people's fears by labelling those who oppose them as terrorists - the new "reds under the bed". By doing so, the real issues get clouded, forgotten, ridiculed and distorted; in the case of the cause we are fighting for, animals continue to die and the perpetrators of violence are given free reign to do what they want.

The Government's new laws, designed to further stifle protest about animal abuse, are a feature of this insidious trend. In an insightful article in a recent Mail on Sunday, politician Tony Banks argued that the Government's new laws would "result in greater power for the medical and pharmaceutical industries (...) to stifle legitimate debate on the morality and medical efficacy of animal experimentation and shield them even further from the public gaze. It is an astute tactic for them to undermine the very real concerns about their work by painting any conscientious objector, no matter how lawful, as a deranged and dangerous fanatic. It means the doors of their laboratories can remain closed and attention conveniently diverted from what I believe are often abominable experiments". He further argued that if scientists are so sure of the validity and humanity of experiments, they should come public; they should allow people to see exactly what they are doing and let them decide if the suffering and death of millions of animals can be justified.

It is clear that the industry fears precisely this exposure; vested interests are a fundamental motivation behind the Government crackdown, and it is no coincidence that the vilification of our movement has its roots in the widespread influence of multinational pharmaceutical and biochemical corporations who stand to lose billions if the truth behind their malpractices and motivation continues to filter through to the already sceptical wider public.

The influence of multinationals is wide reaching, as we all know; they exist to make money and to increase their power. The *prima facie* role of the media is to



report the truth; but this is without doubt illusory. They too exist to make money, and the best way to make money is through sensationalism. Recent tabloid headlines reading 'Animal Rights Terror Leader' might just as easily have read 'Jordan's Boob Bubble Bursts' or 'Sven's Kinky Mistress Reveals All'. Veracity seldom comes into the equation. But it is not as simple as that. Media bosses are required to tow the line to those in power and to those who in turn pull *their* strings.

Plundering through every legitimate animal rights campaigning group, the media have now set their sights on campaigners and campaigning groups in the US. UK and US governments appear to have entered a transatlantic pact to silence the opposition that faces them from AR campaigners. This exchange of tactics has informed and infected media reporting on both sides of the Atlantic, with a lot of "Chinese whispers" added into the recipe. Recent newspaper reports in the US said that the peaceful - annual - gathering in the UK for animal rights campaigners was nothing more than a front for a training camp for terrorists - and I quote - "just like al Qaeda"! They are banning individuals from crossing borders, from public speaking; they are denying them their right to speak freely.

*"This is dreadful news (...) It means that your Planet Earth is hundreds and thousands of years behind this one. Our humans stopped killing and eating animals so long ago that no one knows how long" (Muffin and the Magic Hat by Annette Mills. 1951)* Will they next start to suppress innocent texts like this one because it might indoctrinate children into actually thinking for themselves instead of accepting what they are told? Should we anticipate that the inclusion in the same sentence of the words 'animal rights' and 'direct action' is next in line for censorship?

## THE RIPPLE EFFECT

*Listen!*

*A frog leaping into the stillness  
Of an ancient pond!*

*Basho (705-762)*

If you look at an expanse of water in rain long enough, and you follow the ripple effect from individual drops of rain, you begin to notice a pattern emerging. The most defined ripples are those closest to the centre of the droplet's impact on the water. Those radiating further outwards are less defined, but these are the ones that tend to cross over and merge with the ripples caused by the impact of another droplet on the surface of water. Furthermore, if you focus your eyes on one particular spot, several drops may fall close to or upon that spot in quick succession.

This seems as good analogy as any to define what we have seen happening in the last few weeks on the animals' agenda. Reaction to a concerted campaign to halt construction of the new vivisection laboratory on Oxford was met with media hype, false allegations, smear campaigns, pharmaceutical claims and counter-claims, and government clampdowns. But it was also met with a tremendous amount of sympathy from the public at large, which meant that our message - which has been in no small measure propelled into the public eye because it has been supported by various direct actions undertaken by unknown individual/s - is filtering through despite the opposition's best efforts to silence us. They have seriously miscalculated general feeling about the aims of those in the movement.

Government measures have failed to have the desired effect; rather, they have simply fuelled our determination to forge ahead. We have used the difficulties to our advantage to show a united front, to claim opportunities to speak out about our cause. And it appears that we are making inroads. Instead of being silenced, we have weathered the allegations and accusations by the media.

## RECLAIMING THE IDENTITY THEY TAUGHT US TO DENY

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

The difference between us and the opposition is that we are not ashamed of what we stand for; those that have been imprisoned for direct action have never

tried to conceal the truth surrounding their convictions, or about what they believe. Thanks to the media, the anonymous balaclava'd animal rights figure now holds less terror for the public. They have been "unmasked" not as unprincipled anti-state law-breakers but as articulate, politicised individuals who have served time for their cause, who are unashamed by their 'outlaw' status and wear the badge proudly. The struggle for animal liberation is not about the individuals in the movement, but about the animals they seek to protect. There is no place for career advancement or ego-boosting in this business. Our identities are unimportant.

In media image manipulation, the masked figure as terrorist holding a liberated animal is something of an anathema - it is not the violent image of a gun-wielding guerrilla, but of someone caring. This image is at odds with government propaganda. It is at odds with the image of terror associated with movements whose motivation is to kill as many humans as possible for maximum impact in furthering their cause. In the eyes of the public, the masked animal rights activist now has a human face. Activists who have been imprisoned accept the consequences of their actions and involvement in the cause because they know they speak for Truth, not Profit. The opposition, on the other hand, is ashamed, forced to justify what it does, and in an attempt to depict us as outlaws are using every media ploy, every ounce of political hype to try to discredit a movement whose ideals are not open to question. In the act of unmasking *them* and revealing *their* true face we have made them fear us. In doing so, we have also reclaimed the symbol of the masked figure as our own - not a figure to be feared, but a figure that represents everyman, everywoman fighting for the rights of animals. The masked figure says: this struggle is not about me - it is about the animals.

Suddenly, direct action is in the moral framework. The public and the media want to listen to activists they label "extremists", and even if we are vilified, we are also being noticed. And keeping activists high profile has without doubt been to the benefit of media ratings.



Politician Roy Hattersley made some salient points in a Guardian comment (Aug 2<sup>nd</sup>) when he said that *"opposition to the way in which some animal liberationists behave and a willingness to make them respect the law should not obscure a basic truth about their cause. Experimenting on living animals – although sometimes necessary – is an activity that a civilised nation should find distasteful. Yet the news that a construction company - intimidated by animal rights activists - has abandoned work on a new Oxford laboratory has been greeted by an orgy of simplistic nonsense about the ethics of vivisection...What society has to decide is whether the pain of innumerable puppies, even more rats, rabbits and mice and almost as many primates, is worth the possibility of finding the longed-for cure. Then we have to be sure that the suffering is the only way to discovering a remedy. The second question is technical. The first is moral. It concerns both what we think about animals and what we think about ourselves... A society that is careless about animals' pain is likely to be casual about human suffering. Compassion is indivisible... Investors in biochemical companies complain that animal rights campaigners have revealed their names. If they are embarrassed by the way they make their money, they should draw their dividends elsewhere. Whatever else the liberationists have done, they have made us face up to what an ugly business animal experimentation is."*

And that, I believe, is the prevailing sentiment amongst a large percentage of the British public. We would obviously argue that experiments on animals are never necessary because the data gleaned from them cannot be extrapolated to humans - a case in point is Thalidomide, its side-effects on the offspring of pregnant women well documented. These were not discovered until the drug was licensed for use in humans; although the drug was extensively tested in pre-clinical trials on various non-human animal species, no side effects were documented. The drug is now being used in the treatment of cancers to stop the blood supply to tumours.

The Prince of Wales was recently accused by a member of the medical profession of diverting funds away from science-based medical research by his open support of herbal remedies. He called for NHS funds to be diverted into the alternative field and was slated for it on the grounds that he did not have the experience to back his support of alternatives, whilst the scientist had 20-30 years of laboratory expertise. The Royal Family are not known to be champions for animal rights, but in this one thing they have been very clear - that is, that medical science is not always the best for its patients. The family have long used alternative cure methods and openly advocated them. If they, who have access to and choice of the best of medical care, opt for alternatives first, we must assume that generations of them have seen real benefits. By requesting that funds be diverted into the alternative field because it gives results, the Prince inadvertently scored points for our side - a side we must remember, that is not enamoured of his pro-hunting majesty!

## STANDING YOUR GROUND

It is at times when we are under attack that we find out where our true strengths lie. I learnt two very important lessons early on in life from my parents:

(1) that you had to stand up against injustice, and (2) (this from my mother), that you should exercise compassion for all living things. To our shame, none of my family made the obvious connection or acted upon it until later in life, so effective was the indoctrination surrounding the necessity of using animals for food, clothing and comfort in our lives. Still, the basic foundations had been laid and as information about animal exploitation began to be disseminated more widely, I caught on. The fight against oppression/injustice and against the exploitation of animals were indivisible. It has been a credo I have lived by for most of my life.

Fighting for individual freedoms has never been an easy road. My parents' roles in the Resistance during the

Warsaw uprising in WWII cost them dear - they saw their loved ones murdered, their homes plundered, their lives torn asunder and in a final act of revenge visited upon them by the occupying oppressors, they saw their ancient historic city razed to the ground as they were deported to prisoner-of-war camps. The promised help never arrived and when the war ended, the governments of the west sold them down the line in a deal struck with the Warsaw Pact. Such are the ephemeral loyalties and duplicity of politicians.

My mother weeps to this day when she recollects the loss of animal life she witnessed during the war, the brutality, suffering and loss of human life she observed from a window overlooking the ghettos, or the fighting on the streets in running battles with the Nazis. She weeps for all those who have been the victims of oppressors. It is because of her that I am proud to speak out for the animals. It is because of her that I will NOT stand by and be silent while the Government do their worst.

The measures intended to disable us are set out to divide and rule, to distract us and focus our energies on fighting personal battles to protect individuals' reputations. This we will not do. The propaganda-speak used by the Government today is the same propaganda-speak the Government used to argue their insupportable case when they were challenged by the anti-slavery movement. It was a battle they lost.

Ours is battle they will lose - maybe not today, or tomorrow but they will lose it soon. We must stand firm, take the heat, and oppose attempts to censor the truth, to stop us from disseminating it or to limit those freedoms so hard fought for by our forbears. This is, after all, a democracy. A democracy of sorts, at any rate. The battle we are fighting is not only the battle for animal rights; we are fighting the battle for freedom of speech, for freedom of information, freedom from oppression. It affects us all. If we sit quietly and allow them to silence us, who is to say what will come next?



## When I Look Into Animals' Eyes, I See What I Felt

by Elisabeth Lewin

*Today, when I look into the eyes of animals in the meat industry or animals being hunted or otherwise terrorized, I see what I felt.*

*I was 4 years old, living with my parents in the Warsaw ghetto. Hitler's troops were going from house to house, taking the children from their parents, just as the people in the meat industry take baby animals from their mothers. The children who could walk were taken away, and no one ever saw them again. The despair of these parents and their children was horrible, and I know with all my heart the despair of the millions of mother and baby animals the meat industry separates every day.*

*The "downers" in the meat industry are the same as the older people, the grandparents, were then - the German troops would go after them, screaming, "For soap, for soap!" and drag their feeble bodies onto the train. The same train kept coming back and being filled again with people. They were packed together into freight cars just as the animals are packed together for transport today. One week, they loaded my grandparents onto that train, and I never saw them again.*

*My mother smuggled me out of the ghetto and into a Polish family's Warsaw home. But soon Hitler's troops filled the entire city of Warsaw. I remember peeking out a window of my benefactor's house at a little fenced park with a garden and bushes and a sandbox.*

*I saw German soldiers shoot the mothers and children there, as they tried to hide behind the bushes.*

*It was just like a canned hunt, where the men shoot the fenced-in and defenceless animals*

*- I know just how terrified these animals feel. It's exactly the same.*

*I saw buildings going up in flames. The train came back every day to be filled with the people of Warsaw, Jews and non-Jews alike. They were prodded and packed tightly together on it to go to the concentration camp and be killed, just as the animals are packed together today for transport to the slaughterhouse.*

*Then one day my Polish benefactor, her sister (with her little dog hidden under her coat), and I were loaded onto the train.*

*Like cattle, we were given numbers to wear.*

*Just like animals in the meat industry, we were packed so tightly together that we couldn't move.*

*Some children were sick, wrapped in blankets, and had to be carried.*

*We had nothing to eat or drink and barely enough air to breathe.*

*People were coughing, crying, and panicking*

*- just as animals, petrified and confused, scream in agony and panic aboard transport trucks.*

*After many hours, the train slowed down and the German soldiers jumped off to make sure no one would try to jump from the train.*

*But some people did jump, and the Germans shot them. My mother's friend told me, "Jump", but I was afraid.*

*Then her sister threw her dog off the train and jumped off after the dog.*

*When I saw that the little dog had made it, I jumped too. Then my benefactor jumped.*

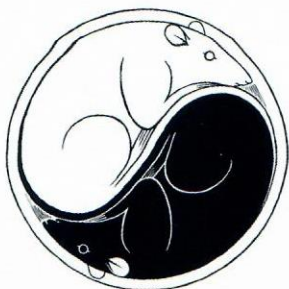
*By a miracle, we all escaped, and this is why I am alive today.*

*My mother was a journalist, and she kept a journal about everything going on. She wrote at night, by candlelight.*

*She was killed, but my aunt published her journal, and today it is in every public library in Poland.*

*It is also published in German, with my mother's picture on the cover.*

*Because of what happened to me during the Holocaust,  
because I was once a victim while others were silent about my pain,  
I don't eat animals and I don't wear animals.  
Every life is precious. Our silence must end.*



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# The history of the German animal liberation front (1981-2003)

by Mela



*'It wasn't a question of **us** being violent. The violence was already out there. The breeding facility was the embodiment of violence against animals. The only question was how we should tackle the violence of which we ourselves were also a part. That's the reason why we had to go in there and take action.'*

This is what Oliver Janssens said in an interview in 1998, thirteen years after he was caught trying to burn down the shell of a new animal lab in northern Germany in 1985. At seventeen, he was the youngest activist in a group calling itself the *Hamburger Band* whose oldest member was sixty.

Like many activists around the world, they were driven to direct action when they concluded that stalls, rallies and demonstrations alone would not make significant inroads into achieving animal liberation. Between 1981 and 1985, they liberated some 500 animals from, and damaged equipment in, laboratories throughout Germany where systemic violence against animals and new forms of oppression had continued to increase, despite the existence of animal welfare bodies going back as far as 1839. The idea of animal rights had only just been taken up and the concept of direct action was anathema to the bureaucratic culture of protest in Germany based on petition signing.



When German activists began to employ animal liberation and economic sabotage in the early 1980s to convey their message, their aim was clear: to destroy an industry and culture that was based on violence to animals. The long term impact of conveying this message through direct action has been the liberation of thousands of animals and millions of German Marks and Euros-worth of damage to the animal exploiting industries.

But Germany is not a country where the simple act of opening a cage can secure freedom nor does its culture provide a supportive network for direct action. As a result, when direct actions took place, there was nothing comparable to the Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group (A.L.F. S.G.) in which they could be reported and thus they generally received little attention even within the animal rights movement. Nevertheless, from 1981, hundreds of communiqués were received by aboveground animal rights groups and those activists who were arrested were able to give interviews. This is an extract from one such story.

It is difficult to be specific as to the exact number of acts of sabotage or liberations that have taken place to save animals. Many such acts of liberation have never been reported and it was not until 8th October 1981 that the first known animal liberation took place in Germany when 48 beagles were liberated from Leuschner with an additional damage of about £8,300.

The direct actions of the early 1980s focused on the vivisection industry and reflected the movement of that time which was slowly beginning to shape itself into an animal rights/liberation movement proper.

Between 1981 and 1986 alone, at least 398 dogs, 960 guinea pigs, 91 cats, 268 rats, 17 monkeys, 267 rabbits and 12 sheep were liberated from laboratories and breeding facilities. But liberations were not the only forms of direct action employed by activists. In what was later described as a symbolic gesture of protest by activists, stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown against a new mouse lab in Berlin in July 1982. A year later, there was an arson attack on Hazleton laboratories in Münster (now Covance), where equipment was also wrecked.

Such acts of economic sabotage were primarily intended to reduce the profits from animal exploitation or indeed at removing the exploiters' means of breeding, torturing and killing animals altogether. It should also be remembered that at this time more than today, these actions highlighted how society treats animals.



In 1987 when ten activists had to appear in court for several liberation actions and sabotage in different areas in Germany they showed evidence that they and activists in Great Britain had obtained from laboratories about animal experiments. Following a showing of some video footage, the courtroom sat in complete silence; the judge then called a recess, the outcome of which was that none of the defendants got a prison sentence - and this despite the fact that the Federal German Prosecutor's Office had accused them of having formed a terrorist group.

Laws regarding the 'setting up of terrorist groups' were very recent and were a reaction to the RAF actions in Germany in the 70s. The state's attempts at pinning the terrorist label on animal rights activists were derided by the media, but it was something the state were nevertheless to attempt a few more times.

Other activists confronted with this accusation were an underground group in the south and activists from a group attached to Andy Wolff. These were among the first animal liberators in Germany and were caught after several actions. Andy was placed in custody for five months in 1983, mainly for an arson attack against a hospital lab in Berlin. One of those involved in this action later recalled in the court room what really happened that night: 'When I opened the fridge [in the lab], dismembered monkeys and rabbits fell out. I have no recollection of what happened after that.' Panic-stricken, this activist had set himself alight and run as a living flame through the lab.

All the activists were released following the trial and to date, not a single activist

has ever been sentenced to prison in Germany without probation. Those arrested have received even more lenient sentences than activists in Scandinavian countries and absolutely in contrast to Great Britain and the United States. Since 1984, however, the animal rights movement has been under surveillance by the *Staatsschutz* (Western Germany's state security service).

Until 1986, activists concentrated on the vivisection industry and although thousands of hens were liberated prior to that year as well as 1435 mink, 200 chinchillas and 300 nutrias, laboratories were the main target. After 1986, the focus began to change, and activists started to target in equal measure other areas of animal abuse including the meat industry, the fur industry, the egg industry and hunting.

Underground actions against animal labs continued until 1994 but as the animal rights movement became more involved with other animal exploitation industries, so too did the underground. In contrast to the UK, all direct actions were underground actions at the formation phase of the German animal liberation movement. Open animal rescues were a phenomenon that did not occur before the mid-90s; they occur regularly today and in all cases, take the form of the liberation of farm animals. Daylight raids are not known in Germany.

In most cases, underground activists did not call themselves ALF or TBF (the German equivalent for the ALF). Communiqués were signed with names like 'The Hungry Woodworms' after hunting platforms had been sawed down,



'The Fiery Mink' after the working quarter on a mink farm was burnt down, or 'Action Nonviolent December' after 22 geese were saved from Christmas slaughter. Activists united under the umbrella label *autonome Tierschützer* ('autonomous animal welfarists'), a term which demonstrates that activists at the time did not see themselves as animal rights or animal liberation activists. After the 90s, communiqués often carried a five pointed black star surrounding a fist and a paw and it fast became one of the symbols of animal liberation - seen as part of a struggle against oppression as a whole. The Tierbefreiungsfront TBF has claimed responsibility for actions more frequently in the last few years; communiqués are occasionally signed with the English abbreviation ALF.

The history of hunt sabotage in Germany is very different from that of the UK in particular since it did not precede direct action as it had in the UK. Hunts have been a big target since the mid-90s and sabotage has a two pronged attack: while some activists try to prevent shooting during the day by placing themselves in the line of fire from hunters' rifles, others run cross-country at night armed with saws. There are more than 300,000 organized hunters and some hundred thousand hunting platforms in Germany - enough wood to keep the activists' & their friends' homes warm in winter. The platforms vary from simple raised stands to huge furnished towers. New Year's eve seems to be a particular favourite among activists for a party in the woods!

The German Hunting Association's reaction to these acts of sabotage has been to claim that activists have been attempting assassination as several hunters have allegedly fallen down ladders and almost broken their necks because the support structures have only been partially severed. Activists maintain to the media that platforms have been totally collapsed, while in some cases there is no room for doubt as some activists have burnt them down completely.

While the chopping down of hunting towers has received a lot of support both within the movement and outside it and is the most frequent direct action today, face-to-face confrontation has become increasingly infrequent following attacks on activists by hunters and the publication of an article in the most prominent hunting magazine which advised that hunters shoot saboteurs first in the arms and legs in a 'dangerous' situation and then if necessary, the whole body. Many hunters use shot and the risk of being hit by one of these pellets is high. For the animals, the use of shotguns means there is definitely no chance of escape out of the circles that are formed during shoots. Barring a few exceptions, all species including deer, wild boar, other mammals and birds are legitimate targets in Germany.

When not on the run from hunters, animals are imprisoned in fur farms. Targetting the fur industry has taken several forms thus far: mink, chinchillas and nutrias have been freed from farms,

fur coats sprayed with paint and butyric acid in fur departments, in warehouses and on the street, buildings and empty sheds on the farms set on fire and empty cages destroyed. Security measures like alarm systems have not been a deterrent to activists. In October 1997 two young activists were arrested near a farm for acting as look-outs during a mink and dog liberation.

Since 1985, the number of fur farms has gone down from 120 to 21 today (two fox farms, all the others are mink farms). The number of animals liberated from fur farms in the past was not very high - activists often claimed to have taken the animals away in sacks or boxes and to have released them elsewhere; several thousand cages were opened in raids in the late-90s, and fences were pulled down. In the winters of 1998, 1999 and 2000 at least 8,700 mink were released into the wild. After 2000, mink liberation suddenly ground to a halt, to be replaced in 2000 and 2001 by acts of economic sabotage to mink and fox farms in which hundreds of cages were wrecked; several buildings on a mink farm in eastern Germany which was destined to reopen were set on fire.

It was a fur farm too, which was the first target of the TBF after the German Unification of 1990: 500 nutrias were liberated in November 1991. No ALF activities are known to have taken place in the former East Germany (DDR); animal welfare standards in the former DDR were even worse than in western Germany. An animal rights consciousness and movement began to develop in eastern Germany; direct action soon followed. The main targets were the meat and egg industry: In 1999 there was an arson attack at a turkey slaughterhouse; in 2000, meat lorries were burned out; in 2001, meat shops were attacked and lorries were set alight at the premises of an egg company; in 2002, there was a bomb hoax at the 14th World Meat Congress in Berlin.

Seen from an economic perspective, the meat and egg industry were the ones to have been hit hardest overall in Germany. In 1988, 'Pil Chicken and the Radical Poultry' attacked a chicken farm causing £3,300 worth of damage. In 1994, an egg sorting machine worth £50,000 was dismantled. An arson attack at a chicken farm in 1995 cost the insurance company £340,000. When activists burned down the empty hen batteries of Europe's biggest egg company that same year causing some £6.6 million worth of damage, the insurance companies dramatically increased the premiums for intensive farms. In 1997, in another battery unit, 400,000 eggs were smashed, the sorting and packing machine wrecked and butyric acid left causing £67,000s worth of damage.





In spring 2000, two egg farms were attacked: 260,000 eggs were smashed, two vans burned out, the can of another van was destroyed and the egg sorting machine was wrecked. Damage was estimated at £200,000.

The lorries of a meat company were burned down in 1987 with £26,700 in damage, 18 vans for animal transport were destroyed in 1988 (£33,300 in damage). Four slaughterhouse refrigerator trucks were set alight in 1993 with a £116,600 loss for the slaughterhouse and a year later, several trucks belonging to a meat company were burned out with a loss of £83,300. In 1995, slaughterhouse equipment was dismantled and butyric acid poured onto the dead animals. The slaughterhouse claimed a loss of £26,000 in the court room (the activists - two from Germany, three from Switzerland - got caught red handed). In 2000 incendiary devices were planted on 12 lorries belonging to a meat company.

However, oddly enough, the most famous action was not the one which caused the greatest economic damage, but one in which the windows of an organic butcher's shop in Bremen were smashed in 1995. Media attention reached as far as the USA and the German public discussed this action for some two years (this was the time when the term 'militant vegans' became synonymous with "animal rights activists" to the German public). Germans were outraged by the action. They had learned that nuclear power was not good for them, but the German society which had voted the Green Party into government in 1998 (with almost no positive effects for the animals), refused to accept that an 'ecologically' murdered animal is still a murdered animal. This event furnished the aboveground movement with numerous opportunities to discuss animal rights in the media and for a while at least, animal rights, animal liberation and veganism became a public issue.

In 2002, there was a lull in direct actions. A few locks were glued, there was some spray-painting, some hunting platforms were cut down, some circus signs destroyed and a few hens liberated – that was almost the sum total of actions reported on their website by *die tierbefreier*, who have been publishing communiqués since 1983. The same level of apathy was apparent in 2003.

Activists in Germany do not live in a climate which encourages direct action. Could this be one of the reasons for the decline in underground activities during the last few years? There is no dissemination of information - neither in



brochures, magazines or on websites such as that which is made available by ALF supporters groups in other countries. There was an attempt to start a TBF SG during 2000; some information was available on their website [www.enviroweb.org/ALFIS/germany](http://www.enviroweb.org/ALFIS/germany) but this website was closed in early 2002 without any explanation. The two existing animal rights magazines (*tierbefreiung aktuell* and *Voice*) report direct action but in most cases this information is very basic; new cooking recipes or the advertising of gigs seem to be considered of greater importance. Is this reserve due to the fact that few German activists have been caught and as a result there are few people prepared to come out into the open to speak out about their experiences? Or is the despondency among activists due to the enormity and scale of exploitation with which they are faced?

Whatever the reason, the new strategy by aboveground activists of concentrating on a few industries may encourage a resurgence in underground activities. In the last couple of years, the animal rights movement has set up two major campaigns in Germany against the fur trade and the vivisection industry. In cooperation with the global movement and with the help of underground activities, these are battles which we have a good chance of winning.

In August 2002, 150 so-called lab rats, mice, a minipig and other animals were liberated from the house of the director of 'Kirchheimer Mühle', Heidelberg University's animal breeding facility

following a long-standing campaign against this breeding facility. In March last year, 25 dogs were liberated from 'lab animal' breeder Harlan in Borcheln which sells animals to establishments such as Covance and HLS. These have been the first liberations from laboratories since 1994, but in contrast to past liberations they have been indirectly integrated with existing campaigns. Using this method, the underground groups are taking up the vitality of animal liberation actions of the past and connecting them with the new challenges of the present struggle. This can only bode well for the future...

As there is no TBF SG group in Germany anymore, here are some websites that report about direct action in Germany:

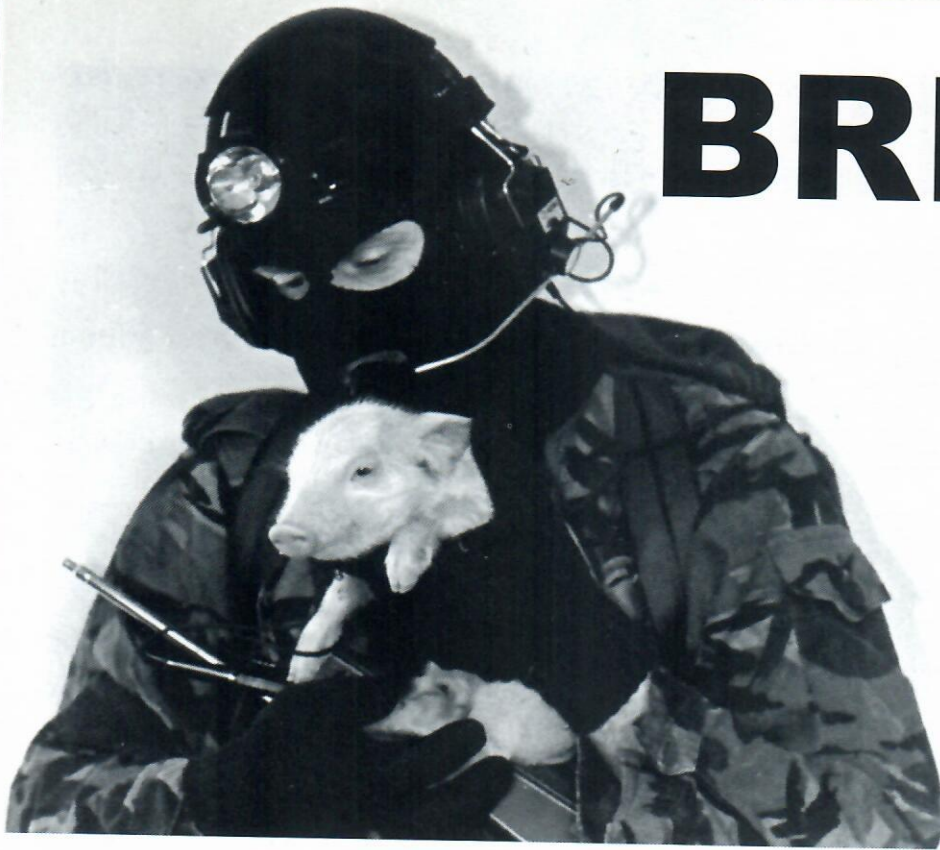
[www.tierbefreier.de](http://www.tierbefreier.de)  
[www.befreite-tiere.de.vu](http://www.befreite-tiere.de.vu)  
[www.shacgermany.net](http://www.shacgermany.net)  
[www.harlan-schliessen.de](http://www.harlan-schliessen.de)  
[www.tierversuche-abschaffen.de](http://www.tierversuche-abschaffen.de)  
[www.offensive-gegen-die-pelzindustrie.de](http://www.offensive-gegen-die-pelzindustrie.de)  
[www.fellbeisser.de](http://www.fellbeisser.de)

For those who understand German, there is a book (paperback) about the history of radical animal liberation actions in Germany (1981-1997) available from which almost all information for this article was taken out:

Haferbeck, Edmund & Wieding, Frank: *Operation Tierbefreiung. Ein Plädoyer für radikale Tierrechtsaktionen*. Göttingen: Echo Verlag. 1998. 272 pages. ISBN: 3-926914-31-9



# BRING IT



## Identifying the Validity

As the animal rights movement grows into a complex and mature social movement; people increasingly are asking, 'What tactics work?' While it can be said that handing out flyers, protesting, boycotting, tabling, etc convert people to the cause, can it be proved that these actions save non-human animals? The answer is, 'yes', but not statistically, since these actions are *outreach methods* and not *liberating methods*. The difference between the two is that the former empowers the public/audience and assumes that they will choose animal rights and veganism, while the latter does not empower or allow them to make a choice, but rather acts out desires and goals. A statistical analysis can demonstrate their relative success or lack of it.

An even more important question however, might be, 'How do these actions compare to the impact of the multi-billion dollar campaign waged by the dairy, cattle and poultry industries; industries that advocate the eating, using and processing of non-human animals?' Here we find the argument that while outreach and protesting are honourable and needed activities, they are not enough to stop - or even slow down - the cogs of the multi-billion dollar industries torturing animals. In an interview published in *Animals' Agenda* by Laura A. Moretti with Rod Coronado<sup>1</sup>

Rod commented that, '... the posters, the bumperstickers, the demonstrations, the protests and keeping a relentless pressure on the industry, and are pushing it to the edge. What'll push them over is going to be sabotage.'

One organisation that has utilised the tactics that have been statistically proven to not only slow down, but to stop the cogs of the multi-billion dollar industries torturing animals is the Animal Liberation Front. In the same interview, Laura A. Moretti asked Coronado, 'Do you think your actions had an effect on the fur industry as a whole?'





# TO THE TABLE

## OPENING ARGUMENTS IN DEFENCE OF THE A.L.F.

by Anthony J. Nocella II / Ed. Richard Kahn

He replied, 'Absolutely. All you have to do is look at its bottom line. They're spending more money now on security and protection from animal rights activists than they ever have.'

Fur farms have to factor in the threat of an Animal Liberation Front raid.' The Animal Liberation Front, known to many as the modern-day Underground Railroad (but to the FBI as a domestic terrorist group), can testify as to the precise nature of specific actions and the numbers of animals the A.L.F. have saved, whether directly or as a result of the closure of a facility following an action.

It is here, then, that the debate begins over the tactics of a group that has demonstrated success where others have failed, but has become branded as a 'terrorist' organisation and is as a result anathema to many. So are they terrorists or freedom fighters?

In what follows, I will walk you through the defenders of the A.L.F.'s position, who argue that based on the Animal Liberation Front's unique ability to save animals lives, raise consciousness, and shock the corporate system, there is a strong defence to be made on behalf of the A.L.F. and that the debate surrounding this organisation is deserving of more attention than it tends to receive. The philosophy of animal liberation, and the groups that attempt to implement it, should be discussed, respected and deemed worthy of analysis at the scholarly and professional level.

By using a critical pedagogical approach, it is easy to validate the tactics of the Animal Liberation Front. The defender's argument is not concerned with the legality of actions, but simply with the fact that there are good arguments to support them ethically and tactically. History has proved that more extreme tactics may be taken up if the issues raised by an extreme group such as the A.L.F. are not addressed. It is a sad fact that the public and peacemakers begin to give attention to the issue only after a building is blown up or someone is harmed.

### The Argument In Defence of the A.L.F.

The North American Liberation Front Press Office provided a statistical overview of the tactics, regions and types of animals liberated in their *2001 Year-End Direct Action Report*.

Nick of *Bite Back Magazine* believes the publication of this report is vital in order 'to compile in one place all of the past year's actions. This helps to identify trends in the direct action movement (targets, tactics, increases/decreases in the number and severity of actions). The report shows that direct action is an important aspect of our movement that should be better recognised and affirmed. It's also important as a historical record, and as a tool to get media attention.' There is no animal rights organisation in the world besides the A.L.F. that can provide that kind of data, and garner its effects.

### The Urgency of Liberation

Why is it that so many animal rights activists are diligently and publicly against the A.L.F. if their effectiveness can be proved? Why does mass unmediated, unmanaged conflict over the A.L.F. arise every time a large group of animal rights activists gets together? While the A.L.F. are the centre of discussion in the movement, they are disliked by many because of the extremist image with which the Front has been tagged. Nicholas Hensey of *No Compromise* magazine believes: 'There are two main reasons why people within the animal advocacy movement don't support the A.L.F. The first, and less salient of the two is the misconception that property destruction is a violent act. Consequently, such individuals do not support the A.L.F. because of the desire to appear non-violent, to fashion themselves in the passive image of King and Gandhi. The second, and more prominent (at least among certain national and outreach organisations) reason is the belief that

the A.L.F. do more harm than good in the way of eroding public support and alienating potential supporters. The belief is that the masked liberationist allows herself to be portrayed as a terrorist and not the benevolent and compassionate advocate that critics of the A.L.F. would like the movement to be viewed as.'

This debate has developed two schools of thought; one that supports the Animal Liberation Front on ethical and tactical grounds, and the other that contests their overall legitimacy. These schools of thought have not only debated, but have occasionally staged near violent confrontations with each other. During debates amongst animal rightists, the question is always raised, 'Are we more concerned about our image than we are about the animals?' More so, pro-A.L.F. statements putting the organisation in the context of revolutionary history are produced, such as:

If the A.L.F. is trespassing, so were the soldiers who broke down the gates of Hitler's death camps; If the A.L.F. are thieves, so were the members of the Underground Railroad who freed the slaves of the South; And if the A.L.F. are vandals, so were those who destroyed forever the gas chambers of Buchenwald and Auschwitz<sup>2</sup>.

Richard Kahn, Ecopedagogy chair of the UCLA Paulo Freire Institute thinks it's critical to discuss the A.L.F. 'for at least three reasons:

1) Nothing is gained by simply repressing reality - groups like the A.L.F. have arisen for a real reason and the examination of the REAL is what is now required. Pretending they're not there and so not inviting them to the party might be politically palatable in some ways, for many people, but it's neither a holistic approach nor is it meeting the A.L.F. with the same level of courage that they themselves evoke as a matter of principle.



2) The A.L.F. are effective. In a time when many animal rights and environmental organisations are being increasingly co-opted and taken over by some form of technocratic mentality, groups like the A.L.F. evoke a counter-spectacle that can demand media attention, block development and slaughter, and provide an outlet for youth wondering if there is any alternative to the status quo...time and again the A.L.F. have shown that there is.

3) While the cases of sweeping cultural transformation and radical militant coup d'etats that were not also supported by the CIA, or the Soviet Union, and/or the investment classes are rare in history, and while in the present case of this American empire such utopian thoughts tend to evoke the tragicomic, the fact is that history teaches that socio-political change is not effected through well - wishing alone. While we might be hard pressed to come up with an exact formula for a successful social revolution, there is no question that militancy and radicalism have always been important factors towards the goal of redefining normative values. In other words, without a more far-left sector, the liberal left (in America, for instance) becomes a Third-Way Clinton republicrat. To the degree that the far-left can articulate itself as a social force (however marginal ultimately) it helps to force left liberals back towards a more contested stance vis a vis the right wing, and so breaks the large scale social hegemony into divided camps. While there are no guarantees in this process, such contestation at least presents the real possibility for reconstructing a more profoundly democratic and counter-hegemonic left socio-political wing and for ushering in new lifestyle practices into the cultural mainstream as a result. The A.L.F. in this vein, then, is a major utopian social force of the moment and has to be considered alongside and part of the larger counter-hegemonic struggle that has been developing globally over the recent years'.

In this respect, other tactical and ethical questions arise. The most prevalent question is 'What is violence?' The definitional problem surrounding the term 'violence' within the animal rights community, stems from the vagueness of the word and the lack of an adequate definition or supporting references for their use of it. If a definition is cited, it is

often quoted out of context. For example, Freeman Wicklund<sup>3</sup> wrote in his article, *Strategic Nonviolence for Animal Liberation*<sup>4</sup>

'According to Sharp<sup>5</sup>, behaving in a nonviolent and nonhostile manner is vital to strategic nonviolence for three major reasons: it increases the sympathy and support we receive, it helps induce mutiny among the opposition, and it attracts maximum participation in the struggle.'<sup>6</sup>

**" ...the public must fight to hold on to the larger and more deeply contextualized definitions of terrorism and violence. Doing so, they will find that many of the institutions in which they had faith are the true terrorists and agents of violence. "**

While this is partially true, Wicklund leads the reader to believe that Dr. Sharp suggests that property destruction is violent, whereas he actually wrote: 'Sabotage, as used here, refers to acts of demolition and related destruction directed against machinery, transport, buildings, bridges, installations and the like. Because these are acts against *property*, they are

not included in the definition of 'violence' in this book. Such acts would however, become 'violence' if they bring injury or death to *persons*, or threaten to do so. Certain other types of action fall somewhere between sabotage and nonviolent action, such as removal of key parts from machinery and vehicles, removal or release in nondangerous ways of fuel for machinery and vehicles, removal or records and files for various government departments and offices (as police) and even their destruction by means which could not possibly cause physical injury to any persons.'

Under this definition, the actions of the Animal Liberation Front would fall under the category of sabotage, rather than violence. It is important to emphasise that A.L.F. guidelines explicitly disavow the right to injure any living being including human beings in any action.<sup>7</sup> When the authority of a given definition of a term like 'violence' is questioned, many people immediately turn to the dictionary. Yet, in Webster's Dictionary,<sup>8</sup> violence is defined as 'exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse.' It is clear, then, that Webster's Dictionary is in agreement with the A.L.F.'s guidelines as well.

Dr. Stephen Kaufman, Co-chair of Christian Vegetarian Association, believes that the movement's message should be about universal compassion and 'that activities that endanger human or animal lives contradict core principles of animal liberation, and, in addition, they are strategically unwise. However, simply because something is illegal does not make it immoral, and indeed we are aware that many laws have been immoral. The Nazi anti-Semitism laws are an extreme example. So, to liberate an animal caught in a leg-hold trap may be illegal, but I don't find the activity immoral, because I believe the leg-hold trap itself should be banned as an evil contraption.'

#### **The New Lens -Academics**

The Animal Liberation Front support community in the United States has grown from a group of young spike-haired, nose-pierced radicals to include notable academics and professionals like Dr. Matthew Calarco, Professor of Philosophy at Sweet Briar College, who learned about A.L.F. and A.L.F.-style activities over a decade ago through books and newspaper articles, and has been reading, thinking, and teaching about them ever since.



Many activists oppose the A.L.F. because they are opposed to its image. But is it the punk-rock image they reject or that of the black-masked liberator? If it is the former, then they will be gratified by the fact that more academics like Dr. Calarco are publicly coming out in support of the A.L.F. If their opposition is linked to the image of the black-masked liberator, then it is an image that cannot be changed; the black attire is for protection.

Yet why should the black attire brand them as terrorists? The A.L.F., after all, wears similar uniforms to those of the U.S. Navy Seals and U.S. Green Berets.

This begs the question: is the public reacting negatively to the image of black-clad individuals wearing balaclavas, or a stereotype created by government and media? Applying the Socratic method might lead one to believe that the actual image of the A.L.F. is not the problem, but rather the label applied to it by the authorities and the public.

Dr. Steven Best - Associate Professor and Chair of the Philosophy department at University of Texas, El Paso - has attended a number of animal rights conferences and is very involved in the animal rights movement. He believes that: 'Many animal advocates do not understand the history or mission of the A.L.F., and because they cannot make sound logical analogies between the need to use paralegal means to achieve human freedom and animal freedom, and they inconsistently embrace actions like the Boston Tea Party, but not lab break-ins. Some activists may respect property norms without fully realizing that animals are not property or anyone's thing to own. Also, many activists have too much trust in the State or rationalist models of social change, thinking that education and legislation alone will bring necessary change. Some fear the consequences to themselves and/or the movement of escalating the struggle to a paralegal front.'

He believes that failure to garner support amongst some in the movement may stem from 'a lack of understanding of the history and ethics of liberation and rights movements.'

## Negotiation jujitsu<sup>9</sup>

This article was not written to gather support for the A.L.F. Rather, its intention is to take up the heated debate around whether or not the A.L.F. is just and whether or not the animal rights movement should afford more discussion concerning the A.L.F.'s place within the larger movement. The examination of the conflicting opinions surrounding this organisation is deserving of a wider dialogue - both philosophical and political - that rises above the partisanship of uninformed emotion. My intention here, then, is to attempt to frame the initial negotiations over the controversial A.L.F. that must take place within the animal rights community if it is not to fragment and subdivide.

Activists must be willing to argue their position as *reductio ad absurdum* - by using the language and logic of the opposition, thereby providing a more universal, and less contestable, foundation for their practices. If animal rights activists justify themselves only with loaded propaganda and quick wit, they weaken their public image at the important level of policy formation. Animal rights activists must not allow the means to justify the ends, and so they must point their own fingers at themselves, remain self-reflexive about the ongoing struggle, and demand a commitment to rigor.

With the growing number of laws degrading our civil liberties, activists need not jump through hoops and allow corporate influence to shape the morals and ethics of society. Rather, the public must fight to hold on to the larger and more deeply contextualized definitions of terrorism and violence. Doing so, they will find that many of the institutions in which they had faith are the true terrorists and agents of violence. The truth will not be found on the television, the radio, or even in a protest pamphlet. Truth will be found through meaningful dialogue about our government, international corporations and religious centres. It is they, historically who have brought the revolution to us, not we to them.

Paulo Freire wrote in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: 'The earlier dialogue begins, the more truly revolutionary will the movement be. The dialogue which is radically necessary to revolution

corresponds to another radical need: that of women and men as beings who cannot be truly human apart from communication, for they are essentially communicative creatures. To impede communication is to reduce men to the status of 'things' - and this is a job for oppressors, not for revolutionaries.'

True revolutionaries cannot fear to write or lecture or debate on any philosophy or tactic, but rather they bait the oppressors to black-list them from schools, libraries and bookstores. Our values must be higher than theirs, and if we accuse them of tyranny (and not democracy) then we in the movement must strive to embody that democracy so much more. History has shown that our voices cannot be suppressed, and so, we must additionally make sure that we do not suppress ourselves. It may be truer today than ever before that 'the pen is indeed mightier than the sword.' but this does not mean that our pens should stop speaking about swords. So please, drop your lock-boxes, your banners, and posters for a moment and speak with the community the truth - the whole truth, not just sound-bites.

<sup>1</sup> Former Animal Liberation Front member, who served 5 years in prison for a number of A.L.F. activities throughout the United States.

<sup>2</sup> Anonymous quote.

<sup>3</sup> Freeman Wicklund, a founder of *No Compromise* (a pro-Animal Liberation Front newspaper) in the mid-90s, later denounced the Animal Liberation Front. See [www.nocompromise.org](http://www.nocompromise.org)

<sup>4</sup> <http://articles.animalconcerns.org/snv/>

<sup>5</sup> Gene Sharp, author of *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, page 608

<sup>6</sup> Freeman Wicklund, *Strategic Nonviolence*.

<sup>7</sup> Animal Liberation Front Guidelines. [www.animalliberation.net](http://www.animalliberation.net)

<sup>8</sup> Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1975.

<sup>9</sup> Pg. 108. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. Rodger Fisher and William Ury. 1991.

Anthony J. Nocella II co-editor of *Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflections on the Liberation of Animals*, is a doctoral student at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University. He is co-founder of Centre on Animal Liberation Affairs [www.cala-online.org](http://www.cala-online.org)



# BUDDHISM

**B**uddhism is an unusual religion. It does not require you to have any particular set of beliefs that cannot be based on your own experience of life. One does not believe in Buddhism, one practices Buddhism. The word Buddhism is from the word Buddha which means awakening; so if you practice Buddhism it means that you are practicing the path of awakening.

The core teaching in Buddhism is the Four Noble Truths. The first of these is that all beings suffer. The second is that this suffering is caused by greed, hatred and delusion, and that this suffering leads to further greed, hatred, and delusion, and so on. The way out of suffering is through the Noble Eightfold Path, which is about how to live your life ethically and mindfully, for your benefit and for the benefit of all sentient beings. There are also the Five Precepts, which anyone undertaking a Buddhist retreat has to abide by. The first of these is to refrain from killing, and this means not killing or causing injury to any animal, or indeed plant, except where necessary. This is the principle of *ahimsa*, or non-violence, which is based on compassion.

## Buddhist View of Animals

In our culture we have inherited a radical distinction between human and non-human animals from the Christian-Jewish-Greek philosophies. Humans are seen as separate from Nature and from all other animals: only humans are capable of rationality, of moral decisions; only humans have souls and they are made in the image of God.

There is no such distinction in Buddhist thought. Human and non-human animals are all part of the same continuum; they are all sentient beings. This is reflected in the reincarnation beliefs of some Buddhists, who think that humans can reincarnate to animals and vice versa. Indeed, the Jataka tales are mythical stories of the Buddha's hundreds of previous lives, in many of which he was an animal.



Animals too, suffer from greed, hatred and delusion, and are capable of moral choices. I know that my dog was capable of choosing to be naughty, and I know that when she was young she constantly whined when I had to leave her but when she got older she was able to accept this abandonment to some extent and was less unhappy as a result. So a Buddhist perspective on suffering is not humanistic and does not involve asserting that there is any fundamental difference in kind between human and non-human animals. In Buddhist mythology, the Buddha was an animal in many previous incarnations, and as an animal he made moral choices. This may seem strange to some animal rights activists who believe that animals are incapable of wrong-doing and that only humans do bad things. However I would suggest that this view, that animals are not capable of making ethical decisions, is essentially a reflection of our Graeco-Christian heritage. The Buddhist view is more similar to an animistic view of animal nature.

The Buddhist texts abound with stories in which the Buddha relates to animals as spiritually important beings. Buddha's ability to calm savage animals and advance their spiritual progress is seen as an example of his great powers, and wild

animals naturally trust him. He had great compassion for even the smallest of creatures, whom he regarded as kin. This was his experience of seeing ploughed land: *"Having beheld the ground in this condition, with its young grass scattered and torn by the plough, and covered with eggs and young of little insects which were killed, he was filled with deep sorrow as for the slaughter of his own kindred. And beholding the men as they were ploughing, their complexions spoiled by the dust, the sun's rays, and the wind, and their cattle bewildered with the burden of drawing, the most noble one felt extreme compassion."* (Buddha-karita of Asvaghosha)

Compassion for all sentient beings is central to Buddhism. It is recognised that human and non-human animals are alike in experiencing joy and suffering, and the will to live. They are our kin; we are all caught together in this world of suffering.

## Duty to Help Animals

One of the four bodhisattva vows chanted by many Mahayana Buddhists is the following: *"Innumerable are sentient beings: we vow to save them all."*

Therefore, just as it is wrong to kill or otherwise bring suffering upon a human being, it is also wrong to kill or bring suffering upon an animal. Furthermore, we cannot stand by when suffering is being inflicted: *"Disciples of the Buddha, you should willingly and with compassion carry out the work of setting sentient beings free... Should you see a worldly person intent on killing an animal, attempt by appropriate means to rescue or protect it and to free it from its misery."* (Brahmajala Sutra)

## Buddhism and Meat

The killing of animals for food is an unnecessary infliction of pain, suffering and death. This applies to both hunted and farmed animals.

*"What kind of person torments others and pursues the practice of torturing others? Here a person is a butcher of sheep, a butcher of pigs, a fowler, a trapper of wild*



*beasts, a hunter, a fisherman, a thief, an executioner, a prison warden, or one who follows any other such bloody occupation. This is called the kind of person who torments others and pursues the practice of torturing others."* (Majjhima Nikaya 51)

Nowhere in the scriptures does Buddha give express permission to his followers to eat animals, and there are many instances where animal food is forbidden. Here is one instance from the *Scripture of Brahma's Net*: "*Disciples of the Buddha, should you willingly and knowingly eat flesh, you defile yourself... Pray, let us not eat any flesh or meat whatsoever coming from living beings. Anyone who eats flesh is cutting himself off from the great seed of his own merciful and compassionate nature...*"

In spite of the thousands of texts where killing is said to be wrong, many Buddhists, particularly in the Theravada (South East Asian) tradition, as well as most Tibetan Buddhists, eat meat. They quote one or two texts where it appears that the Buddha allows meat eating in certain circumstances.

Buddhism is not a fundamentalist religion. Its rules are merely guidelines and they are made to be changed. There is no "thou shalt not" in Buddhism and the precepts are precepts not commandments; there is no God to command. Ethics are about acting skilfully in the circumstances in which you find yourself. Tibetans living on the Tibetan plateau really could not survive without meat. But in the circumstances in which we find ourselves now, there is no need to eat meat. This is the view taken by most western Buddhists.

### **Buddhism and Animal Experiments**

At the time of the Buddha there was no such thing as animal experimentation. However, Buddha frequently spoke out against animal sacrifices. These sacrifices were at that time often made to various gods in the hope that the person doing the sacrificial act would earn merit and be rewarded by the god with riches or good health. The priests who made these sacrifices on behalf of lay people made promises of efficacy, and received payment for their services.

Buddha opposed these sacrifices because of the suffering inflicted on the animals. He also said that the sacrifices did not work, and warned against magical thinking. Priests were making money by playing on people's desires and ignorance.

It is possible to compare these ancient sacrifices with today's killing of animals in laboratories. The latter-day priests, claiming a monopoly of truth, are the scientists in white coats. The papers they publish are incomprehensible to lay people, rather like the ancient Sanskrit hymns. They actually use the word 'sacrifice' as a euphemism for kill. They also promise good health in return for the animal sacrifice. As in ancient India, money is made by exploiting people's ignorance and their longing for health, their fear of suffering and death.

Like the ancient animal sacrifices, animal experimentation does not work, does not provide the magic cures that it is always promising. And it inflicts unnecessary suffering on millions of sentient beings.

Even if some good could come of an animal sacrifice, this is not sanctioned by the Buddha: "*I desire not that fruit which is sought by causing pain to others! To kill a helpless victim through a wish for future reward - it would be an unseemly action for a merciful-hearted good man, even if the reward of the sacrifice were eternal...*" (Buddha-karita of Asvaghosha).

### **The Compassionate Revolution**

According to Buddhism, the causes of suffering are greed, hatred and delusion. Greed, which causes us to eat meat or to cut down forests for profit; hatred, which enables us to kill and cause suffering to others without caring; and delusion, which provides countless justifications for any action, which enables us to believe, for example, that non-human animals are not worthy of moral consideration. But greed, hatred and delusion do not only cause suffering to all the beings with whom we come into contact, they also cause our own suffering. It is our constant craving for 'more' that means that we are never satisfied with our lives. The ill will we feel towards anyone or anything in our lives that gets in the way of what we think we want sours all our relationships and leads to further unhappiness. Our deluded minds constantly make things real that

are not real; we believe things are permanent when in fact they change and are lost. Our crowning delusion is our belief in our own egos.

I am like this, and so are you and so is Colin Blakemore. We are all human beings, we are all conditioned, and we all suffer. In a different set of circumstances I do not know that I would not be a rapist, a vivisector, or George Bush. Buddhism therefore calls for universal compassion - compassion even for those who are so deluded and hateful that they can torture animals or rape small children. What must it be like to be in their minds? They are trapped in their minds, like we are trapped in ours.

So what should we do about suffering? We need to address its causes both in ourselves (our own spiritual journey) and in others (activism). But in any truly revolutionary path, these two spheres must be barely distinguishable: our activism is our devotion to universal compassion; and the purpose of our spiritual path is to save all sentient beings. Buddhist Animal Liberation would not say that any particular action was wrong, regardless of the circumstances. Each action has to be judged according to the conditions at the time, and what you do is as important as how you do it. If you react to your own feelings of hatred then the chances are you will be putting hatred out into the world which will cause further suffering. But we can take strong actions as long as we pay attention to our own inner processes; it is even possible, though very difficult, to kill with compassion.

There is only one sacred world, so to divide it up into sacred and profane spheres is damaging and delusional. I am saddened to see that so many animal rights activists do not see anything spiritual in anything - they have inherited the Christian profanation of the world. Every single tree and rock and creature is sacred, and every moment is sacred. Every single moment is precious, beautiful, and infinite, if only we could take the time to really see. The challenge of Buddhism is to devote yourself fully, passionately to your life now: there is no moment other than now and no life other than the one you are living. And to do this for the sake of all sentient beings - and that includes 'animal abusers'!



# BOOK REVIEW

**TENZIN'S DEER** by Barbara Soros  
Illustrated by Danuta Mayer  
Barefoot Books ISBN 1-84148-809-7  
Review by B.B.



'Tenzin's Deer', originally published in 2003 is now available in translation in a number of different languages. It is the sort of picture book in which a child can immerse itself, with richly detailed, wonderfully evocative illustrations that provide a feast for the eye and the imagination. The story, by Barbara Soros, draws on the ancient wisdom of the Tibetan Buddhists to tell of a young boy named Tenzin and a musk deer he finds dying in the woods after she has been wounded by a hunter's arrow. Inspired by his dreams, and attentive to the needs of the animal, Tenzin learns a number of lessons in the act of bonding with her and restoring her to health. Most importantly, he learns to understand what it is to love deeply and to recognize that all living things have the right to be free and to be treated with respect and compassion.

Some readers may already know the illustrator of this children's book through her work in the animal rights movement. A strict vegan, she also runs a small animal sanctuary in South London, which is funded from her work as an artist and illustrator. Of her work on the book and its connection to her beliefs

about animal rights, the artist says: "I have been privileged to experience the sort of bonding and love that Tenzin felt for Jampa, and know that earning the

trust of a wild creature is a life-changing experience (...) The spiritual and physical well-being of all life on Earth depends upon our ability to change the way we perceive it - there is a price to pay for assuming that everything is there for the taking."

She believes that teaching children at a very early age to consider all life forms as equal in status and importance to our own is one of the most

important lessons to be had in life.

The message of the book is a valuable one, presented most beautifully, with richness of landscape and local colour, and above all with a great tenderness both for the young boy and his fragile charge. Highly recommended, a book to be treasured by children and adults alike.

Read Alone: 7-9

Read Together: 5-10

## **Earth First! Environmental Apocalypse**

Author: Martha F. Lee

Publisher: Syracuse University Press

ISBN: 0-8156-0365-7

Reviewer: Claudette Vaughan

For a brief period, the Earth First! movement encapsulated the potency of environmental guerrilla warfare like none other before it. The Earth First! founders created a movement that emphasized the preservation of wilderness above and beyond human interests. It brought with it the tactical response of eco-sabotage for the first

time, forcing direct action out of the closet and setting in motion a movement that could boast thousands at its height.

Founded by the charismatic Dave Foreman and a handful of his conservationist friends in the summer of 1980, EF quickly became a provocative counterculture that ultimately hoped for and worked towards the fall of industrial civilisation.

Martha F Lee's book *Earth First! Environmental Apocalypse* highlights the early days of the movement, the battles fought—won and lost, the personalities, the problems, the split of the movement and its eventual downfall. Mainstream media would have us believe EF's downfall was based around the idea of a decentralised monkey-wrenching movement that fed off rebellious energy and couldn't control the direction in which that energy was released. However the truth is that the movement itself simply grew too large and discontented with its original "tribal structure". Foreman didn't help matters either by courting controversy when he suggested that AIDS might be welcome as an effective means to reduce the worlds population.

## **EARTH FIRST!** *Environmental Apocalypse*



**Martha F. Lee**



By the time Judi Bari and Dick Cheney arrived on the scene, a new breed of Earth First'ers were growing weary of Foreman's heavy-fisted ways. This new breed placed their faith in education and a more secular movement revolving around social justice issues. The pro's and the con's of the changing face of EF is a fascinating study in itself. One is left to decide whether the EF small coterie should have stayed that way, as they were difficult to track while they remained a decentralised, unpredictable but united movement. Did the new EF'ers render themselves less dangerous to the state than their predecessors? Should movements move beyond reactive struggles that have been waged through instances of abuse? Whatever one concludes, Earth First'ers paid a terrible price for their collective love of the earth.

In 1990, Judi Bari and Darryl Cheney were victims of a car bomb. When Judi was pulled from the wreckage, she was immediately arrested by the FBI and accused of carrying the bomb herself. A lot of people guessed it was a set-up. She filed a lawsuit against the FBI and let it be known that she thought the timber industry and the FBI were in cahoots. They placed the bomb there to scare her. She knew she was targeted for political not personal reasons. Rod Coronado, in his most recent interview talks about what price EF'ers have paid for their beliefs (see [www.antivivisection.cjb.net](http://www.antivivisection.cjb.net)). In 1988 another EF'er forest defender was murdered when a logger dropped a tree on David Gypsy Chain killing him instantly. The logger was never arrested.

Earth First is known for its insurgent tactics such as arson, tree spiking, and disabling heavy road equipment. The joy of this book for me was witnessing how a movement began, flourished, provoked and encouraged radicalism. For all its problems, EF remains an original. I would go as far as to say their influence will remain potent for decades to come. Naked physical activism is not dead. The state, and through its agency, the police, might think they have

it stitched up but they don't. It is precisely this grass-roots activity that gives hope. For sure, we need all the hope we can get. There are too few stars in a dark sky. The challenges we face are super-size. Earth First was a microcosm for the wider social justice movement. Who among us does not feel privileged to be given the chance to save lives and entire species and sectors of life on earth? In 30 years time will they say of us "They rose to the challenge so splendidly. They became giants of the human condition" – the selfsame "human condition" that is born out of a savage mind intent on destroying life on earth.

Earth First! was jarred into existence by a disaster, their leaders hoped to remake the world in the image of their vision by threatening private citizens and the state. When the adherents became frustrated with their lack of progress, the movement became unstable. Did they fail? On the wider worldview they have transformed the world of activism. They paid a high price, and we should be grateful to them for their courage.

### **The Mother Cage,**

a novel by Maire Ni Bhordaig

Published by Magpie House

ISBN 0-9544721-2-8

RRP £5.99

This is a book that could easily be read over the course of one or two nights. I am not quite sure who the book is aimed at and whilst I found it very insightful, it read on occasion a little like a lengthy ALFSG action report. But that is a simplistic assessment. The Mother Cage is more than an action-packed yarn – in giving a human face to the balaclava'd figures seen in ALF photos, it contributes to the debate about how the animal rights movement is stereotyped

The Mother Cage is a graphic fictional guide into the emotional effects and practical preparations surrounding an ALF raid on a farm breeding guinea pigs for vivisection. There are clear parallels to be drawn with the Newchurch raid in

2000 as well as to victories over establishments such as Regal rabbits, Hillgrove or Consort Beagles.



The story is told intermittently from the individual perspective of a variety of characters. A scene is often shown from a number of viewpoints, a narrative style that emphasises how people can be led to judge the actions of others without looking deeper for the insecurities and complexities that can lead even the best among us to act the arse at times. The characters are not portrayed as heroes but as believable individuals – some of them not particularly likeable – capable of making mistakes. This is a nice touch of reality.

Among the tensions surrounding the raid, The Mother Cage depicts the struggle between surviving the everyday ups and downs of life in a world where animal abuse is systemic.

From the outset, plans for the liberation look destined to fail; we are surprised by nail-biting moments of disappointment and unexpected heart-warming turns. There are moments when the activists almost get caught red handed, moments where people's egos, bravado or fears threaten a successful outcome. The conclusion to the story is surprising but is not all doom and gloom.



The author has gone to some lengths to show that the movement is made up of a diverse mix of regular people, not bomb-making terrorists determined to wipe out society. The inclusion of a homosexual and an individual from an ethnic minority as two of the main characters demonstrates that we are by and large an all-embracing movement, and it encourages a greater outreach to social groups which are under-represented. By contrast, the book also shows that sexist homophobics sadly also exist and that their presence within the movement does much to undermine it.

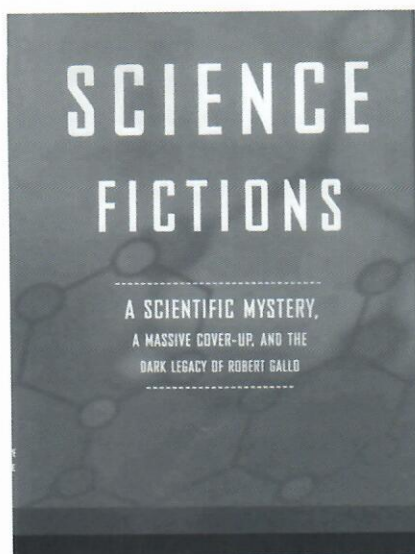
It would be nice to think that Mother Cage could one day be included on English GCSE modules much as books on Nuclear War such as "Brother in the Land" and the film "Threads" were part of my curriculum at school. These were about the only worthwhile things I took from school and made me start to really question things at a time when back in 1988-89, Nuclear War seemed inevitable. The issue of Animal Liberation must surely be considered deserving of an equal hearing; it is a topic brought up in school debates and this book could be an ideal introduction, encouraging teenagers to think for themselves and avoid the apathy that threatens to overwhelm so many to accept things as they are.

The Mother cage is a thoroughly enjoyable read; despite the generous spattering of expletives throughout the book, it is one well suited for a teenage demographic as well as for those who remain sceptical about animal liberation or the ALF. I would urge readers to ask local and school libraries to order the novel and I look forward to reading more books by Maire Ni Bhraidaig.

Magpie House, PO Box 339,  
Wolverhampton, WV10 7BZ  
[www.magpiehouse.org.uk](http://www.magpiehouse.org.uk)  
[info@magpiehouse.org.uk](mailto:info@magpiehouse.org.uk)

## Science Fictions

A Scientific Mystery, a Massive Cover-Up and the Dark Legacy of Robert Gallo  
By John Crewdson  
Published by Little, Brown 627 pages  
Reviewed by Claudette Vaughan



*Science Fictions* is the story of how AIDS was discovered and Crewdson's investigative journalism provides a sobering read. It is scrupulously researched and documents enough treachery, negligence and megalomania to make even the most hardened supporters of vivisection sceptical of the scientific establishment and the archetype of the infallible white-coat scientist working for the good of humanity.

A most disturbing feature of *Science Fictions* is the explicit way in which human and animal concerns take a backseat to careerism and personal aggrandizement.

AIDS researcher Robert Gallo played the game of big science better than most. He first attracted notoriety for his studies of a retrovirus he christened Human T-Cell Leukemia, or HTLV. Then, when gay men started showing up at hospitals in 1981 with symptoms of what was to become known as AIDS, Gallo joined the search for the cause of the new disease. He came to believe that his HTLV was the cause of AIDS. As it turned out he was wrong.

At the same time there was a relatively obscure trio of scientists working from the Pasteur Institute in Paris – Francoise Barre, Jean-Claude Chermann and Luc Montanier. They had first isolated HIV from AIDS way back in January 1983 although they had initially christened their virus LAV. Gallo ignored the findings of the French and took to undercut them by publishing in a series of articles the claim that his National Cancer Institute had first isolated HTLV in several AIDS patients. The anomaly was that Gallo had received samples from the French before he sent them ones from his own lab yet he was claiming their success. The French had beaten Gallo to the punch but he wouldn't stand for it. Too much money and status was at stake.

Gallo was not about to relinquish his role by letting truth get in the way of personal advancement. He became the most famous AIDS researcher in the world. Tens of millions of dollars flowed into his Institute, and taxpayers got precious little in the way of genuine scientific achievement in return.

There is no mention in this book of all the primates that have been needlessly murdered so "AIDS research" can continue nor of the millions of dollars spent per year around the world infecting primates with the AIDS virus – although primates cannot get fully blown AIDS, only humans can. (See the Greeks '*Sacred Cows and Golden Geese*').

By exposing one of the biggest scandals of scientific fraud of our time, John Crewdson's book provides us with insight into how the mechanism of big business interests keeps the wheels of its own well greased and operating. Thankfully, more and more such books are coming out against the medical establishment these days, thereby furnishing the Animal Rights movement with further ammunition against the opposition.



# SPEAKING OUT

*In guerrilla warfare, you try to use your weaknesses as strengths...if they're big and you're small, then you're mobile and they're slow, you're hidden and they're exposed. You only fight battles you know you can win. You capture their weapons and then you use them against them...you grow stronger as they grow weaker.*

*Gene Hackman in "Enemy of the State"*

## TECHNOLOGY BITES

When SHAC campaigners started their long drawn out battle against Huntingdon Life Sciences, it was also the beginning of a new era of campaign tactics made available through technology and global networking. Activists took full advantage of the new possibilities at their fingertips and caused havoc to Huntingdon's share figures in the city, compounding the after-effects of negative publicity received from an expose documenting cruelty by animal technicians working for the company.

The success of SHAC's methods has been proven, and has influenced the shaping of campaigns the world over. They demonstrated that one has to think on the hoof, to be able to respond and adapt to developments at a moment's notice. Their methods have been widely adopted and it would probably be generally accepted that the group have been a fundamental part of the renaissance of the movement.

SHAC heralded the birth of a sharper, smarter, more adaptable form of activism that operated within the law but walked a fine line. Legal campaigning no longer meant you had to take a back seat. It meant you could be proactive and effective without necessarily getting out of your chair! Of course that had to be - and was - strongly supported by demonstrably active pressure with publicity, frequent demonstrations, leafleting etc. Shareholders, businesses involved with

Huntingdon interests - all were highlighted, and buckled under pressure. Global networking made the campaign more effective, and activists around the world joined the SHAC campaign to target the company's interests in other countries.

Inevitably though, the downside of this success was that sooner or later, the opposition would dig their heels in still further and use the 'legal' means within their power to hinder the progress of pressure groups attempting to bring about change. This they certainly have attempted to do with the SHAC campaign, which nevertheless continues today undeterred, inspiring other campaigning groups with the wit and diversity of their methods. The current SPEAK campaign, broadly highlighted in this article because of recent repercussions following successes in their own campaign have now added their own contribution to this genre of kick arse tactics.

## LESSONS

The trend to undermine powers of protest available to animal rights campaigners has extended far beyond SHAC's domain, and has been evident in the implementation of newly tightened laws this summer. Recent government measures were triggered off by a chain of events which began with the withdrawal of Cambridge University from plans to build Europe's largest primate research centre earlier this year.

Plans for the Cambridge vivisection laboratory were opposed from the outset. In February 2001, South Cambridgeshire District Council heard a planning application from Cambridge University for a massive new research complex, which was to be Europe's largest primate research facility. The application faced massive opposition from local residents, environmental campaigners, anti-vivisectionists and police and was unanimously rejected by the council. Subsequent appeals to reverse the decision were backed by PM Blair and bosom buddy Lord Sainsbury, a man with huge vested interests in the biochemical industry who had previously donated some £11 million to the Labour party.

The case went to further appeal stages. At the third and final appeal, an independent government appointed inspector once again ruled against the construction project on the grounds that it would not be in the national interest as the government had frequently tried to argue. The government flouted accepted procedure and overruled the final decision. They announced that the new research facility would go ahead nonetheless.

SPEAC (Stop Primate Experiments At Cambridge) - a new campaigning group set up specifically to challenge the project - was formed by a coalition of animal rights groups - mobilising a mass movement, which began a concentrated wave of non-violent action against the university.

Throughout developments, methods employed in Cambridge by campaigners were varied, from mass leafleting, invasions and occupations of college buildings, the disruption of lectures, award ceremonies and university council meetings. This effectively created an atmosphere of siege, ensuring that the public were made rapidly aware of the campaign.

National and weekly demonstrations were organised with one staged in New York against Cambridge University's International interests, showing the effectiveness and power of global networking as well as the fact that the campaign was just beginning to get into its stride.



In mid January 2004, several hundred activists descended on Cambridge city centre for an angry demonstration, which made its way to the proposed site on the busy A14 road. Within minutes the road was blocked. Traffic was backed up all the way into Cambridge and then onto the motorway. Other activists invaded the site and occupied rooftops while still others visited the homes of university council members or entered colleges. Several people were arrested for obstruction of the highway including veteran campaigner Joan Court, founder of Excape. It was a foretaste of the disruption Cambridge authorities could expect if the project went ahead.

The relentless pressure proved effective and on 27<sup>th</sup> January, Cambridge University capitulated and announced that they had abandoned their plans for the primate lab, citing the spiralling cost of security as the prime factor in the decision. The original cost of the project had been estimated at £24 million but had already reached £34 million before a single brick had been laid. Animal experiments are not off the agenda at Cambridge, but expansion is.

### ON LIES, SECRETS AND SILENCE

Incensed by the successful opposition to the project and by the extensive support the campaign had received, those with powerful vested interests in the vivisection industry were clearly not prepared to let another laboratory project slip through their fingers so that when plans to build a similar, if smaller, facility in Oxford were born, those involved adopted deceit and duplicity to conceal the true nature of the project in hand. Their secrecy - the weapon they used to hide from public scrutiny - has thus far proved to be not only their Achilles heel but also a trump card for the movement that has allowed the subsequent campaign against the facility to gather strength and momentum.

Following the unprecedented success of the Cambridge campaign, it was crucial to sustain the momentum gained by the mobilisation and SPEAC campaigners began to look at other animal abuse institutions on which to focus their attention. They regrouped under the broader generic name of SPEAK and set their sights on the very project the authorities had tried to keep hidden.

Disclosed by a source within Oxford University, it soon became clear - as subsequent information was to prove - that it was closely affiliated to the original, failed Cambridge build and that the Government and both universities had been involved in high level talks prior to the start of the facility's construction to discuss the transfer to Oxford of plans destined for the abandoned Cambridge laboratory. Once again, biotech-obsessed Sainsbury was there to add his voice.

The campaign to prevent the construction of Oxford University's vivisection laboratory followed hot on the heels of the Cambridge victory. Slow to pick up, the campaign has gradually gathered momentum with varying tactics adopted.



**SPEAK**  
The Voice for the Animals

*Oxford University is now engaged in the construction of a £16 million 'STATE OF THE ART' animal centre to carry out experiments on monkeys. Please help us to stop them.*

[www.speakcampaigns.org.uk](http://www.speakcampaigns.org.uk)

SPEAK (The Voice For The Animals)  
PO Box 6712, Northampton, NN2 6XR Tel: 0845 330 7985, 07906 497 317  
Email: [info@speakcampaigns.org.uk](mailto:info@speakcampaigns.org.uk)

### CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES TO DATE

Leafleting; local and national demonstrations; a campaign demanding the release of two 15-yr old deliberately brain-damaged rhesus macaque monkeys that had been used repeatedly in experiments; a 3-day public hunger strike outside the site by veteran campaigner Joan Court, which gained huge support from Oxford students and locals at a time when media coverage of the SPEAK campaign was high; high profile press releases; emails to those affiliated to the construction. Acts of economic sabotage by unknown activist/s acting independently around the country against companies participating in the project also made their mark.

The response to all or some of the above by those involved in the build have to some extent been historically informed by the previous success of SHAC's tactics; opposition from shareholders in companies affiliated to the construction undoubtedly swayed some of the decisions, as withdrawal of those concerned has been swift. The message is clear: involvement in such schemes is no longer seen as economically viable.

The trigger for the recent wave of publicity was without doubt the withdrawal of various construction companies from the Oxford build. Responding to approaches by email from Speak, Travis Perkins were the first in the construction project to down tools and withdraw their services. They were soon to be followed by Montpellier and RMC. The architects are the most recent to disassociate themselves from the build. The site now stands abandoned, empty and silent as the government puts the construction project out to tender.

### MEDIA HYPE

Attempting to slur the animal rights movement, the media delved into the pasts of numerous campaigners, labelling them "extremist" and "violent" by turn. Those they targeted have never made a secret of their criminal records. Paradoxically, it was also those very people that the media approached during the height of the media frenzy, no doubt hoping that their responses would further compound the myth that we are dangerous lunatics, intent on overthrowing society. A cynic might be tempted to say that it made good viewing rather than sound journalism. But when your cause gets airtime on prime time TV and radio, when publicity surrounding that cause, regardless of how distorted, appears in every national and local newspaper, you know you're hurting someone. And the media want you.

The fact that media outlets have almost exclusively interviewed the very people from the movement whom they have labelled as terrorists because of their previous criminal records; the fact that those individuals have proved articulate and reasoned in their debate and not resorted to the mud slinging tactics used by the opposition tends to suggest that the voice of activists now carries more weight than that of apologists within the



movement. It is one thing to 'talk the talk', and quite another to 'walk the walk'; doing both carries more weight than words alone.

This has been an interesting lesson on two counts. Looking at the movement from within, it has demonstrated that both the nationals and smaller campaigning groups have shown a united front; there have been none of the public disassociations from tactics and even direct action of former years. Those interviewed from all walks have been at pains to push the message across that animals are suffering, animals are dying and whether we condone law breaking or not, the reasons behind it are understandable, given the government's failure to address the issues they promised to prioritise in their pre-election manifesto "New Labour, New Life for Animals". An offshoot of this publicity has been that the sympathy from the public sector has been rekindled, and support for the cause has burgeoned.

If it has done nothing else, the onslaught by the government, the media and the pharmaceuticals has convinced us that we are getting to them. They have been unable to disable us, eradicate us or silence us, and their attempts at doing so are doomed to failure. Certainly, they can outlaw how we operate, they can define acts as illegal tomorrow that were perfectly within the law yesterday. They can erode the right to protest to the point that was reached in the years of apartheid in South Africa, when no more than 10 people could gather at any one spot without being arrested for illegal demonstrations. News out on the streets already is that fur pickets, which have been conducted without incident regularly for many years, have been subjected to excessive policing and wrongful arrests in London. Quite how far the long arm of the law will reach is a question for the future.

Isolation, disempowerment, enforced silence, marginalisation, the discrediting of a cause or individuals – these are all tactics designed to prevent freedom of expression and thus the free exchange of ideas. Historically these methods are known to be ineffective in the long term, even if they are effective as a gag in the short term.

Our role now is to withstand that onslaught.

## FREE THE OXFORD TWO

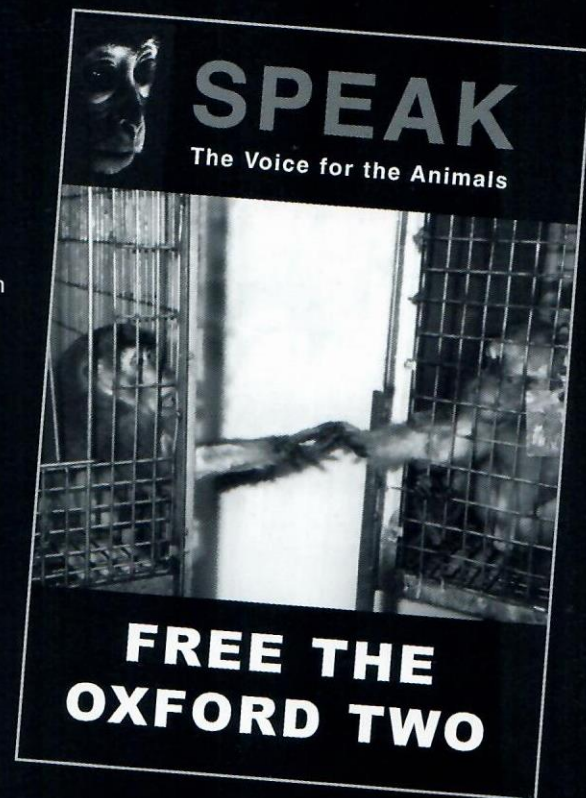
In some Far Eastern countries, monkey's brains are considered a delicacy – particularly served directly from the opened skull of the living monkey strapped down at the dinner table. In most parts of the Western world, this would be considered – as rightly it should – unspeakably barbaric, and yet the majority who hold this opinion will not give primate experiments a second thought. This disparity between held opinions where both practices are abhorrent are attitudes that urgently need addressing.

Although prominent scientists like Dr Ray Greek invalidate the use of animal models in extrapolating data for understanding human brain disease, Oxford University scientists continue to use animals extensively, particularly monkeys. Among the scientists conducting experiments such as the one described below were two key spokespeople who have been staunch supporters of the new Oxford build.

In past experiments at Oxford University – many of them funded by the Medical Research Council – primates have been forced to undergo a variety of brain-damage experiments lasting months and even years. Scientific papers documenting the experiments reveal a catalogue of suffering and misery and it should be remembered that animals are routinely either "terminated" at the end of experiments such as this so that their brains can be examined, or they are used for further experiments.

Among the most recent primate research to have taken place at Oxford University was that involving two rhesus macaque monkeys known to have been used in multiple experiments over a 15-year period. Artificially brain damaged at the age of 5, ten years before the experiment in question, they were two of three brain-damaged macaques used in a comparative study along with a 48-yr old human subject who had suffered brain damage when he was 8 yrs old. The third macaque - aged 14 at the time of the experiment - was brain damaged six months before research began, then tested for reaction times to visual stimuli along with the three other experimental subjects. The researchers observed that the human subject had never been able to respond as fast as the fastest monkey, nor were they able to figure out why one monkey had behaved differently to the others.

The two 15-year old macaques became a focal point for the campaign early on when SPEAK attempted to secure their release after years of torture. The purpose of this aspect of the campaign was to personalise their plight, to highlight that vivisection is not about statistics, but about the suffering of individuals who suffer pain, fear, hunger, and deprivation as we do. SPEAK'S announcement was predictably met with a wall of silence from the University. A sanctuary, used to dealing with traumatised primates, has agreed to take the Oxford Two should the University decide that they are willing to demonstrate compassion. SPEAK are still awaiting a response.





## LABOUR AND THE BIOTECH INDUSTRY:

*Blair and Sainsbury - A marriage made in heaven or two hearts that beat as one?*

Many who voted for Labour to bring them into power did so under the misconception that Labour would somehow come good on their pre-election promises with regard to animal rights, among which was the assertion that they would reduce and eventually end all animal experiments. It is a promise that they have not only done nothing to fulfil but also one on which they have actually done a complete volte-face. Indeed, animal experiments have increased for the first time in nearly 30 years. Given recent developments at Cambridge and Oxford, it is clear that the trend is set to continue.

Multi-billionaire Sainsbury is a key figure behind the determined Government drive to expand the vivisection industry in the UK. His powerful influence has presented a serious conflict of interest politically since his Government appointment, contested by opposition politicians as well as environmental and anti-GM campaigners. The recent attempts to overturn established legal procedure in the Cambridge example demonstrates political corruption at the highest level, with Oxford and Cambridge alumni Blair and Sainsbury (respectively) whose double act makes a mockery of democracy and shows complete contempt for public opinion.

Their prominent role in PICTF – the Pharmaceutical Competitiveness Task Force – tells us everything we need to know about where their loyalties lie, and what that augurs for animals in the laboratory. Sainsbury chaired a working group that made unilateral decisions on areas of policy in order to weaken vivisection regulations – an area which falls strictly under the jurisdiction of the Home Office and Animal Procedures Committee. The task force is responsible for subverting Government policy on animal experimentation and among its stated aims are the following:

to isolate variables which would foster competitiveness and innovation within the pharmaceutical industry and strengthen it.

to encourage the development of a vibrant biopharmaceuticals sector taking into account the interface with land use planning.

to identify the potential for promoting further partnership between the industry and academia, industry and government.

These stated aims are clearly manifest in the recent Cambridge example as well as the current Oxford project. Vested interests reign, and global multinationals - both biotech and pharmaceutical - wield the hand of power. This is the enemy we are dealing with when we fight the Oxford development, and challenge corruption at the highest level.

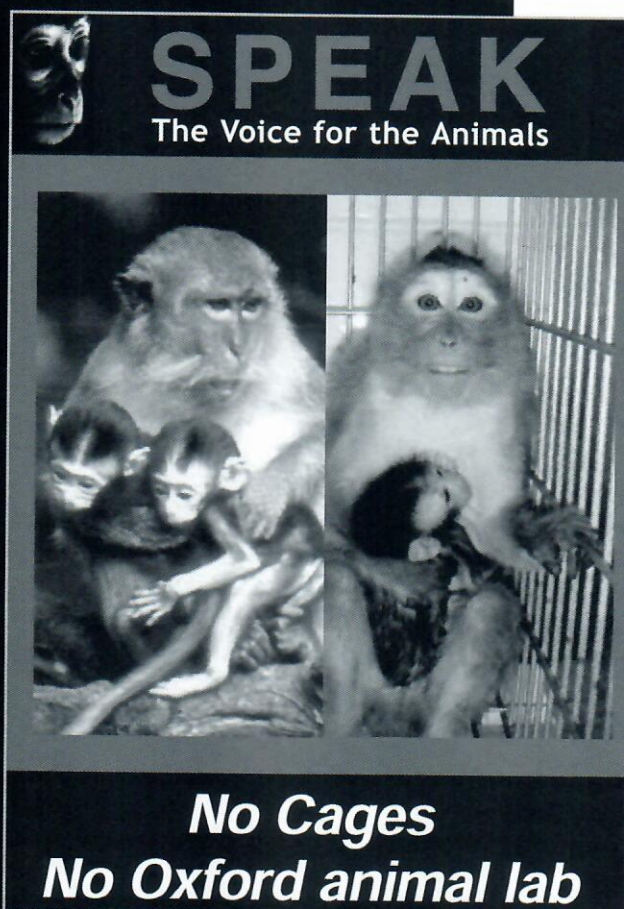
## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

When those in authority conceal facts from its people, whom are they protecting? In a true democracy, facts should be available for close scrutiny. Historically, vested interests, disguised under the blanket of 'national security', are responsible for secrecy and the moratorium on free access. Much of what is documented is concealed and denied public access. This suggests that some pretty horrific things have been done in the name of 'national security'. Might it be that the resulting outrage at what is done in their name would cause the public to turn against their governments?

The tactics of the opposition in concealing plans surrounding the true purpose of the Oxford University Research "Hotel" are no exception. Their methodology has been rooted in attempts to avoid the public gaze, to avoid a public that is demonstrably and increasingly uncomfortable about the issues surrounding animal experiments. But the government, the university, and the vivisection industry have been wrong-footed thus far on the veracity of their public statements about the nature of the laboratory, about the nature of the research to be carried out there, and about the animals destined to be held and used there.

After so many claims and counter-claims – and those to date give the animal rights movement one set to love – alarm bells have started ringing about the true agenda of those involved in the project and their manipulation of facts.

Much as in the case of the proposed Cambridge primate lab, the facts surrounding the Oxford laboratory were kept hidden from the public from the outset. Plans for the new building held in the Oxford Planning department mysteriously went missing ensuring that details about the development were





unavailable for scrutiny. Misinformation as to the purpose for the building disseminated by the university and thence the media was eventually shown to be complete fabrication.

Once their assertions were disproved, various spokespeople for the project alleged that 98% of the animals to be used for research in the building would be rodents; a revelation by Professor John Stein in a recent Oxford Mail (brother of celebrity chef Rick Stein), clearly intended to undermine facts revealed by campaigners conversely ended up undermining him and all those backing the new research centre, throwing the alleged 98% rodent figure into question. His disclosures about the facility suggested that it is intended to house large colonies of primates in groups in order to improve their lifestyle, and upgrade it from the solitary barren cages in which they are housed as standard (and if we are to believe Stein, the latter "live the life of Riley, watching soap operas on TV!"). In order for primates destined for research to be housed in colonies, large areas would be required within any building complex. A big leap from the original assertions that the building was not intended for animal use at all!

To suggest that this sort of secrecy is to protect the researchers is arrant nonsense. The reality is that it is intended to hide the true facts about what goes on within the walls of such institutions. If the scientists identities are concealed it is because they are ashamed of what they do. It is because they fear that the truth will show the moral recidivism of which they are culpable and reveal them for what they truly are. Roy Hattersley and Tony Banks both argued in recent newspaper articles that if those involved in vivisection stand by what they believe, they should be open and public about it. They should allow access to their laboratories and allow the public to decide for themselves whether this is truly something that they want done in their name.

## FACING CHALLENGES

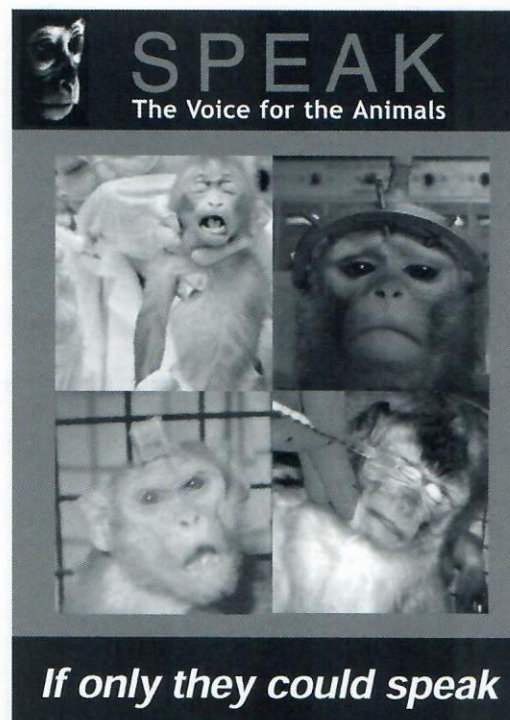
That vivisection is allowed to continue is an indictment of our species as much as of the narrow views entrenched by society.

That scientists and academics may well hold the key to cures in the future is not open to dispute; some of them are individuals with phenomenal - even brilliant - minds, capable of ingenuity and thinking that would leave most of us standing. That they lack the imagination and morality to use their intelligence astutely and humanely is self-evident. True science is an exacting art, and the purist must surely deride the inefficiency of animal models, the manipulation of data and the ad infinitum repetition of experiments necessary for scientists to publish papers to further their careers.

It is a well documented fact that the desensitising process which takes place in the human psyche engaged in acts of violence is a very real one; it takes a rare kind of courage in a scientist to break free from the institutional indoctrination of a system, which has people believing that there is no other valid way to further knowledge than to continue clinging to a 100-year old (plus) bad science. Those that speak out against it may well risk losing their standing and credibility within the scientific community. Those that lack the courage to defy it do themselves and the public they allegedly serve no justice, let alone the countless human and non-human victims that litter their hallowed halls.

Only they know the true motives for their original involvement in a barbaric science. Only they can answer whether their motives had their roots in compassion, in the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of it, in the pursuit of self-advancement or in the fulfilment of a predisposition to brutality. Whatever their reasons, the challenge to them must surely be to move with the times and apply the advances in technology to non-exploitative research that does not torture, maim and kill defenceless animals.

The challenge to the government is to have the courage to refuse to be answerable to multinationals who all hold the world to ransom for the sake of a quick buck. The challenge to the government is to stop being taken in by the lies of profit, to face up to their pre-



**SPEAK**  
The Voice for the Animals

*If only they could speak*

election promises and to begin improving the lot of animals as well as improving a national health service which has gone into rapid decline during their seven years in office. They could begin by redirecting the government funding - and thus our taxes - for the Oxford project and reassigning the building site for the construction of a new hospital and start really helping to save lives.

The challenge for us is to continue fighting every inch; to adapt to the ever-changing legal landscape and to test the strength of the measures now in force to prevent us disseminating the truth. If these measures are in any way successful, then we will find another way. Unlike institutions and governments, we are free to think outside the box, to move with the times and metamorphose in any way necessary to keep fighting our corner. The Oxford laboratory must not be built. Huntingdon Life Sciences and Newchurch Guinea Pigs must close. Animal abuse must end and we must continue to fight our cause whatever the cost to our freedoms. In the end, we have a choice. The animals do not.

*For further information:*

*SPEAK website:*

*www.speakcampaigns.org.uk*

*SHAC website: www.shac.net*

*SNGP website: www.liberation-now.org*



# BRIEF REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SOUTH EAST ANIMAL LIBERATION LEAGUE (SEALL)

By former SEALL Convenor; Mike Nunn



**T**he South East Animal Liberation League was established in September 1983. In the tradition of the Northern Animal Liberation League and other similar groups, it was to organise both legal and illegal non-violent direct action events in the South East 'catchment' area. Various events led some of its founder members to conclude that the activities of the

animal rights movement as a whole needed to progress beyond the success of events being dependent on the 'sheer weight of numbers' method and business principles of planning and procedure should be applied to every operation in order to maximise success and minimise the arrest ratio in any exercise. It was a doctrine that eventually prevailed.

The events organised by the SEALL over its comparatively brief 13 month active existence were numerous, diverse and original. The following account gives a snapshot insight into its history, sourcing media reports and documents and literature published by the SEALL to provide an overview of its activities.

Shortly after SEALL'S inauguration, all the animal rights groups covering Kent, East and West Sussex, the Eastern borders of Hampshire and the Northern borders of Surrey were invited to attend a general meeting to find out about - and join - the organisation. The reception was enthusiastic and enabled plans to begin in earnest for a number of legitimate activities already under consideration. Indeed, by February 1984, dozens of well-planned legal, one-off events and several serial campaigns had been activated.

The action which marked the SEALL as a regional animal rights group capable of exercising 'large scale direct action' was the mass protest on September 18 1983 against the Wellcome Research Laboratories in Beckenham involving over 150 activists.

Although the Wellcome demonstration was given immense coverage by the media, the actual event revealed that there had been weaknesses in both the planning stages and in establishing a *raison d'être* for the raid. The confusion amongst many demonstrators as to what they were required to do having entered the complex resulted in over seventy arrests even though police arrived an hour after the event had begun.

Another near disaster occurred on March 15, 1984 - the fag-end philosophy being retained when a mass raid against the Surrey University vivisection laboratory resulted in further mass arrests.

In a report published in the April/May '84 edition of *Target*, the organisers admitted that the raid's shortfalls from poor forward planning had resulted in the arrest of fifty two activists. It had been a costly lesson and, in future, there was to be a strict code of procedures whenever a group called on SEALL to provide activists for a local direct action; this reduced the likelihood of things going wrong.



It was obvious that whilst legal demonstrations had proved very successful, the 'back of an envelope' planning for mass events resulted in the arrest of activists and was unacceptable. Therefore, those responsible for planning this type of procedure were dropped by mutual consent, and undertook tasks to which their abilities were more suited. They were replaced by others who had already proved their aptitude for non-violent direct action.

The level of security and secrecy was increased. When a target was decided upon, an ad-hoc committee investigated its merits. Committee members were interchangeable thus ensuring that no one person or group of people could be held "responsible for organising a particular event, especially as co-ordinators and contributors" were "drawn from an area of several thousand square miles and" were "continually changing." (SEALL newsletter, Target Aug/Sept 1984.)

It was also decided that SEALL would no longer instantly respond to every emerging act of animal abuse as this could scupper the potential success of any already established campaign against a given institution. Campaign preference would be given to exposing any individual or company involved in contravening existing laws regarding the welfare of animals.

As to the Surrey University event – defendants were advised by a couple of knowledgeable SEALL members on the morning of the trials as to what their plea should be and as the following edited newspaper report indicates, all the cases were dropped:

*In an amazing turn-around, Guildford magistrates dismissed the charges against 55 animal rights protesters... Chairman of the magistrates Mr Kenneth Price asked all the defendants in turn – including 14 juveniles – if they were willing to be bound over to keep the peace and if they would accept the adjournment. All 55 said that they had not been told that the case might be adjourned and that they would rather that it was settled then. Magistrates adjourned the cases until 2pm when Mr Ross said he could not offer any evidence as there were no witnesses present. Consequently all the cases were dismissed.*

Progress in the Anti-Shamrock campaign (a holding centre for wild-caught primates) was recorded in a report published in the April/May edition of Target:

*An indication of the success of the Shamrock campaign to date is the swearing out of an affidavit by every director or employee at Shamrock who had received a visit to their private home by activists. What they wanted was for Mike Nunn to be committed to Pentonville Prison for his contempt in aiding and abetting BUAV in its breach of the injunction, and the sequestration of BUAV funds. What... they got was an undertaking by the BUAV to publish a stern request in the next edition of the Liberator, asking that their members refrain from demonstrating outside the private homes of Shamrock directors and employees, and in no way interfere with the business of Shamrock. Mike Nunn was also enjoined.*

*What emerges from this that is to our advantage is the learned judge's statement that he had no objections to peaceful demonstrations against Shamrock. We await the correct interpretation of this statement by BUAV Solicitors, but, on the face of it, we can now go down paths that we previously understood were closed to us.*

The action against the Royal College of Surgeons (RCS) took place on Sunday, August 26, 1984. Sixty South East Animal liberation League activists entered the Royal College of Surgeons at Buxton Brown Farm, Downe, in Kent with video

and photographic equipment. They left with films, photographs and most importantly, reams of documents and slides.

These were to provide evidence of possible criminal offences committed by the staff of this charitable institution. As a result of the League's action, the BUAV was able to examine copies of the evidence and could proceed with the prosecution of the Royal College of Surgeons. The first two summonses were issued by Bromley Magistrates Court "for breaches of section 1(1)(a) of the Protection of Animals Act 1911 alleging that the Royal College of Surgeons allowed an animal to suffer from an act or omission." Further summonses were sought and other action taken by the BUAV against the RCS through official channels.

SEALL's action at the RCS achieved massive press coverage. Visual material was available to the press within hours of the event and by 6.30pm it was headline news on ITN and was extensively covered by RTN and BBC TV. TV-am ran successive showings of the video itself the following day. It was front page news in the Daily Telegraph and an excellent article appeared in the magazine City Limits. Many animal rights groups organised follow-up campaigns, distributing thousands of leaflets showing dogs photographed inside the RCS, supplied, it was suspected, by Mr David Walker of Wickham Laboratories, Hampshire. It was hoped that these would provide at least one positive identification.





It was the first such action to result in a prosecution against a British laboratory. For a change, it was the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection and the animal rights movement who were the prosecutors. Whilst the actual penalties for offences under the 1911 Act were minimal, the prosecution itself was of major importance.

Alongside the RCS exercise, another raid took place linked to the campaign to illustrate that ex-pets were being used for experiments. The raid on Saturday September 29, 1984 against Bios Consultancy and Research Laboratories in Bagshot, Surrey was widely reported locally and nationally. According to one newspaper report published the following Monday:

*An animal lib group have freed 14 beagles from an experimental laboratory. The raiders claim the pedigree dogs have skin, mouth and eye infections, as a result of tests made on them at the Bios Consultancy and Research Laboratories in Bagshot, Surrey. Twenty five members of the South East Animal Liberation League broke into the lab kennels on Saturday night using wire cutters. All 14 dogs, valued at £4,000 each, are now said to be in 'safe houses'. The League claims that the animals had been used in toxicity experiments to test reaction to cosmetics, drugs and food additives.*

To obtain a satisfactory level of media coverage, every action had to be more spectacular than the last. Activists original intention had been to return to the laboratory buildings that night to search for documentary evidence that ex-pets were being used in experiments.

This would have made the overall exercise into a twin-pronged attack. However it transpired that the complex had recently been fitted with a highly sensitive burglar alarm system presumed to be directly linked to the local police station. This made a follow-up raid an unjustifiable risk because of the time factor. Indeed, even as activists began the rescue (which included giving the dogs doped food and waiting for the drugs to take effect), alarms began ringing and continued throughout the operation.

Thorough surveillance of the area prior to the raid had revealed that many locals walked their dogs over public heath-land lying north-east and west of the nearby town of Bagshot. The kennels housing the beagles lay adjacent to this common land. With lookouts posted for the police, the activists continued their work, slipping leads on the dogs, hiding balaclavas and joining the walkers. Some dispersed along several pre-scented, wooded trails leading to waiting vehicles parked just a mile or two from the target area. Others travelled over six miles of public land before reaching their rescue car. These drawn-out procedures ensured that police and their dogs were put off the scent and assured the activists a secure getaway.

Until the day before the raid, recordings had been made of barking dogs - assumed to be ex-pets - held in the selfsame shed in which the beagles were housed when the raid actually took place. The intention had been to follow up the successful conclusion of the action with the broadcast of these recordings in the Bagshot, Southampton, Portsmouth and Fareham shopping centres. The hope was that an owner might recognise the voice

of their pet - an owner who may have been persuaded by a vet that their animal should be put down...

According to an update on the beagles eight months later in the April 1985 edition of Target, all fourteen dogs had been neutered and spayed and the tattoos removed from their ears by a sympathetic vet to leave no trace of the original number. The dogs were settled into new homes, and most delightful of all was the birth of "seven puppies, four boys and three girls, a few weeks after the raid. The knowledge that they have been born into a safe, secure world, rather than a world of pain, should give everyone involved in animal liberation an immense feeling of satisfaction and cast aside any doubts we may have as to our methods of campaigning." Incidentally, a photograph showing all the puppies looking over the edge of a wicker basket was reproduced by the BUAV as a postcard - they sold thousands!

The following report was published in the December/January 1984/5 edition of Target. It is an account of the SEALL triple raid on Sunday, October 28 1984:

*At 10am on Sunday 28th October the South East Animal Liberation League carried out its third major action in 60 days. Wickham Research Labs, Cottage Patch Kennels and A.P.T. Consultancy (allegedly suppliers of dogs to the Royal College of Surgeons) were invaded as over a hundred SEALL activists took part in this well-planned operation.*

*Following the raid, a large number of activists were subsequently arrested and detained for lengthy periods, sixteen of whom were held on remand in Winchester and Holloway prisons for up to nine days. To date, nineteen people have been charged with 'Conspiracy with Intent to Rob' a very serious criminal offence indeed. Strict bail conditions have been imposed, including night-time curfews, and the provision that none of the nineteen are to have anything to do with 'animal rights' at all. However, our grateful thanks must go to our solicitor, John Mackenzie, for getting bail at all.*

Typically, a national newspaper published a kaleidoscope of make-believe in reporting the Wickham events of Monday October 29, 1984, the day after the raids in a report entitled *Animal Lib Rampage*:







*Violence by animal rights activists reached new extremes yesterday in a series of linked raids on research laboratories and dog kennels in a small area.*

*Research scientist Dr David Walker was coshed when five hooded raiders, some of them women, burst into his flat at Swanmore, Hampshire, brandishing iron bars and hammers. Dr Walker, 48, is director of research at the Wickham Research Laboratories a few miles away at Wickham, near Fareham, which within a few minutes was the target for an attack by a gang of about 30 people. Thousands of pounds worth of damage was caused as they ransacked the building, smashing doors and windows with sledgehammers and removing documents which they claimed proved experiments on rabbits and guinea pigs were being carried out.*

*Another laboratory in the same village was also attacked at around the same time.*

*The fourth raid on Cottage Patch Kennels, near Wickham, was described by vet Bill Cartmell, who owns the research lab: "It was orchestrated and had all the hallmarks of a para-military exercise," he said. "They blocked off the road and about twenty of them poured into the house. The family inside must have been terrified. But then these people used tactics guaranteed to produce feelings of terror." According to Mr Cartmell, the owner of the kennels, a Mrs J. Worley, her son and daughter-in-law were tied up and dumped on the floor. All three were roped around the neck. The twenty raiders were armed with pick-axes, sledgehammers and sticks and wore masks.*

*The South Eastern Animal Liberation League claimed later that 150 of its members were involved in the raids. Police said that 15 people were arrested in connection with the incidents.*

*Former Liberal candidate for the area, Mr Peter Boulden said: "This campaign of terror has been going on for months.*

*The area has been bombarded with propaganda literature. Today's incidents have appalled me and many others."*

*It is interesting to note that Dr Walker - who had allegedly been "coshed" - had recovered sufficiently to be interviewed on the early edition of national ITN News that same evening, showing no physical sign of injury whatsoever, a fact which - much to his embarrassment - was remarked upon by the ITN interviewer conducting the discussion.*

*During the subsequent trial, the presiding judge, Mr Justice McCleary, deemed that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute on the two counts of conspiracy to rob and conspiracy to assault and on Monday October 28, 1985, he directed the jury to record verdicts of not guilty, leaving only the conspiracy to burgle and commit criminal damage on the indictment. Consequently, the "iron bars and hammers" allegation was also acknowledged to be a figment of Dr Walker's imagination. (Only one hammer was employed to gain access - there were no iron bars.)*





Mr Boulden's comment that the "campaign of terror" had been going on for months was mood music since no activist had ever even set eyes on anyone connected with the abuse establishments that were entered.

The alleged damages claim may have been based on the Wickham assessment that damage caused amounted to £35,000. However, during the trial the judge agreed with the defence claim that there was no gratuitous damage but only that necessary to gain access, and the true value of structural damage was only £3,500. As for the mystifying revelation that "another laboratory in the same village was also attacked at around the same time." - this most certainly wasn't SEALL!

The Worelys were merely restrained from attacking the intruders whose only interest was to find documentation linking the dogs passing through the kennels with APT Consultancy, Wickham Laboratories, or both!

As for the subsequent trial, having been wrongly refused legal aid, and having discussed the options for my defence over a predicted 10 week-long trial with a solicitor experienced in animal rights cases, I followed his advice not to waste

thousands on a barrister as I'd be going down anyway. He recommended I defend myself, and enjoy it! So I did - and I did!

Whilst the Royal College of Surgeons had been fined a mere £250 for causing unnecessary suffering to a monkey, the convicted Wickham prisoners suffered the following sentences for attempting to expose a pet stealing racket:

Mike Nunn - 3 years.  
Gordon Briant - 21 months (9 suspended).  
Sally Miller - 18 months (6 suspended).  
John Quirke - 18 months (9 suspended).  
John Curtin - 9 months (3 suspended).  
Sue Baker - 9 months (4 suspended).  
Kevin Williams - 6 months (3 suspended).  
- A total of 9 years & 9 months.

From my own point of view, the final twist in this saga was when, during sentencing, Judge McCleary had the temerity to state that I was also responsible for organising the RCS and Bios events!

As a result of the SEALL activities, the illegal practise of the use of ex-pets in vivisection was highlighted. It demonstrated how information gathered by legal and illegal means can be used effectively in (a) garnering public support (b) working in conjunction with established campaigning organisations. In its relentless if short-lived onslaught on the animal abuse industry, it captured the imagination of novice and old-time campaigners and undoubtedly coloured the development of campaigning methods today the world over. We know from the strength of authoritarianism exerted against the association, that it was fast becoming too successful for the comfort of the executive. Therein lies the true value of SEALL.





# THE AUSTRIAN ANIMAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

## – CHANGE COMES EASIER IN SMALLER COUNTRIES



**I**n Austria, as in many other countries, the animal welfare issue reached public attention in the mid seventies during the furore over the slaughter of baby seals in Newfoundland but it was to be some years before questions were asked about fur production in Austria itself. Vivisection was the biggest issue in the 1980s and the success of a campaign launched in 1988 to include animals under civil law was to have a far greater long-term impact than the ineffective laws introduced that same year regarding vivisection. The civil law - which states that animals are not 'things' and therefore have rights - has recently been used as a defence for a number of liberations of pigs and chickens. It is argued that failure by an animal exploiter to comply with the law can justify minor law-breaking to ensure

the safety and well-being of an animal. The first of these test cases was due to be heard in September 2003.

The end of the 1980s marked the start of the campaign against fur farming in Austria. New activist groups were formed and the ALF made its debut. In December 1988 a number of fur shops were attacked with sling-shots and superglue. Further attacks followed in which fur wearers' coats were sprayed and fur shop windows broken. In 1990 the ALF co-ordinated simultaneous attacks on fur shops nationwide: the first of these was on 14<sup>th</sup> February in 3 major cities, the second on 20<sup>th</sup> February; when a total of 24 fur shops were attacked in Vienna.

In August 1990, the Konrad Lorenz Institute for Behavioural Research published a report on fur farming which

proved very damaging for the fur industry. It concluded that the basic needs of animals farmed for their fur CANNOT be met satisfactorily if the industry is to be financially viable at the same time. In light of this report, the Austrian movement focussed its attention on fur farming. They conducted a survey which showed that the 1970s figure of fur farms - estimated at a couple of hundred - was down to 43 fur farms holding mink, foxes, nutrias and chinchillas.

A concerted campaign was needed. One fur farm after the other was inspected and the conditions documented. The resulting video footage and stills were presented to the media, which briefly took up the issue. When their interest waned, a few farms were occupied and blockaded to rekindle media attention. Some farmers' reactions were extreme; TV news broadcasts showed a farmer threatening activists staging a rooftop protest by shooting his gun in the air.

With public awareness rising, a new strategy was adopted. It was discovered that farms operated in a legal vacuum: there were no specific laws regulating fur farming. However, there were laws regulating the keeping of 'wild animals' (as opposed to domestic ones), with exceptions for zoos and circuses. These laws were now used, together with the footage from inspections, to take a number of farms to court as they were definitely in breach of those laws.

As a result some farms were fined and others closed down. Animals freed in this way went to sanctuaries where many are still alive today and videos of them, as they are now, are used to educate school-children. Meanwhile, court findings were that provincial governments should be issuing regulations on fur farming (Austria





is a federal state with different animal laws in each province). As a result, 5 out of 9 Austrian provinces outlawed fur farming outright (mainly those which didn't have any fur farms anyway). 3 of the remaining 4 made the new regulations so restrictive (demanding that fur animals not be kept in cages and/or that mink had swimming water) that all their farms had to close; new licence applications were turned down.

Two mink farms now remained. In 1996, the ALF raided one farm and released some mink. Video footage was sent to the media. A German TV crew approaching the farmer for an interview were not only refused but also threatened by an armed farm employee. Footage of this was broadcast but there were no prosecutions. There was little media backlash to a hoax bomb threat made on the farm a while later. It appeared that keeping the fur issue out of the public eye was preferable to any publicity and it was suspected that the farm owner's alleged strong links to the conservative party (which was - and still is - in government in this province), may have played a part.

Nevertheless, the last province introduced a new law regulating fur farming in July 1997. Originally this was to have outlawed wire mesh in favour of solid floors and to have provided mink access to swimming water, but in a concerted effort by the fur

lobby, this regulation was diluted at the last moment. Animal rights activists mobilized immediately against the farm, staging permanent demos and blockades and fly-posting giant banners on the motorway. Groups toured schools and gave public talks distributing petitions. Direct action pressure on the farms escalated. The farms were raided again in June and then July 1997; up to 600 mink were released in one raid. (Each farm had approx. 5000 mink). On another occasion a farm lorry was damaged by activists. In January 1998 one fur farmer succumbed to pressure and closed down his farm.

The provincial government was lobbied further; A/R groups financed and published two more scientific reports on the keeping of mink for fur. Pressure mounted on the government as new elections loomed. When the provincial governor refused to meet activists and receive the 35,000 signatures they'd collected, activists decided to step up the protest. On Tuesday 10th February 1998, 18 activists occupied the governor's offices. After a 5 hour stand-off, the governor agreed to talk to the activists. He watched the fur farm video and actually promised to ban fur farming immediately after the election, should he win it. He did win and in November 1998 the last Austrian fur farm closed and fur farming was banned.

This was obviously not the end of the campaign since fur was still being imported and sold in Austria. Today the industry is in steady decline as a result of the relentless pressure to decimate it. In 1998 the ALF claimed responsibility for attacks on at least 95 fur shops in Vienna. 2002/2003 saw the largest number of anti-fur demos yet with 114 registered nationwide. At each of the demos, anti-fur videos were shown on giant screens or on TV sets to change the public's attitude. In 1938 there were 1000 fur shops in Vienna alone; by 1995 that figure stood at 272. In 2000 there were 174 fur shops in Austria; by mid-2003 there were only 137 left. However, much of this lost trade was picked up by department stores, so specific campaigns have been waged against them with varying degrees of success, tactics included the staging of permanent demos, run-ins and home demos at managers' houses).

In 1996, A/R people found out that organized animal fights were still being held in Austria. Rams were being pitted against each other in the Ziller mountain valley. Many people in the area breed fighting rams especially for this purpose. Protests began in spring (1997) when fights are organised; witnesses saw rams dying in the arena during contests. Activists were beaten up and attacked by locals. On the last major ram fight during the finals, activists stormed the arena and an activist with a paraglider dropped thousands of leaflets. The following spring the campaign was stepped up with massive protests organised outside each ram fight; some 40 activists stormed the arena in the finals to stop the event. A discussion held on a major TV showed experts opposed the 'sport' and in the spring of 1999 the local council banned any further ram fights. No fight has ever been organized since.

The biggest success story of the Austrian animal rights movement so far is the circus campaign. There are 10 circuses in Austria. By 1996, 7 of them no longer used wild animals. That meant that there were 3 wild animal circuses left in Austria. A major campaign against the Golden Circus caused its bankruptcy in November 1999. Its two bears were handed over to a sanctuary in September 2000.



The biggest target was the Austrian National Circus. In 1996 the circus was investigated and conditions recorded. Circus people reacted violently to ensuing demonstrations, and protesters were attacked; on one occasion, the circus director was convicted of punching a protester in the face. That same year the Viennese environmental council funded a report by Austrian scientists into the well-being of circus animals. The report's findings were unequivocal in that the keeping of wild animals in a circus is counter to their well-being.

The campaign gathered momentum. In 1997 demos were staged at most of the circus shows in Eastern Austria, and at many in Western Austria. Circus employee violence continued but there were no convictions; A/R media and literature covered the circus issue extensively since the media had backed the circus consistently throughout the campaign.

In 1998 the circus lost a court case against A/R people for unlawfully damaging their business. A/R activity was considered a constitutional form of protest; protests continued unabated. Not to be outdone, the circus employed 3 solicitors in 1999 to make the government introduce an exclusion zone around the circus. These attempts to stop A/R activity also failed. Then in 1999 the circus tried to impose injunctions on 2 named protesters. They succeeded only in 1 of 4 counts, having to bear the brunt of the costs. Demos continued unabated and were staged twice daily before shows in almost the whole of Austria.

In 2000 circus employees injured two protesters severely; one needed 3 days' hospital care after sustaining injuries to the kidney. Activists' reaction was to hold demos continuously in front of the circus, screening the English Animal Defenders video, bringing civil court proceedings for damages (which the circus has paid already) and a criminal court case. Later, all circus attackers were found not guilty. A couple of months later, the ALF fire bombed the circus for the first time, using 7 timed incendiary devices.

The circus fled to Germany and Holland where they were also none too welcome. Meanwhile activists produced a hard

hitting video against the circus which they distributed widely to politicians, MPs, provincial governors, celebrities, media etc, and showed it in schools and public places. On receiving a copy of the letter and video himself, even the president of Austria expressed his support for the campaign.

On 7th December 2000 the governors of all 9 Austrian provinces signed an agreement to ban wild animals in circuses (except llamas, camels, buffaloes, zebras and parrots) until 1st Jan 2005. On 21st December 2000 the renowned Austrian National Circus Louis Knie - an 8th generation circus family since 1809, with a cousin directing the famous Swiss National Circus Knie - went bankrupt. It was bought by a consortium of wealthy businessmen and relaunched on 10th March 2001. Permanent demos resumed. The circus was close to bankruptcy; after 2 further arson attacks - one on 12th April 2002 in Vienna when a tractor was burned down, and the other on 25th March 2003 in Klagenfurt when 2 vehicles were burned down with 40.000 Euro damage; and with the looming ban on wild animals in 2005, the circus gave up. It sold all its wild animals; its 9 elephants went to Italy.

The Billy-Wien circus was now the only circus left in Austria using wild animals. This circus tours in the south and west of Austria so it was the most difficult target against which to campaign. In summer 2001, A/R campaigners discovered that the circus Billy-Wien, wanted to import an elephant (they already had 2), and after investigating further, they alerted border control. When it transpired that the circus had no legal papers for the elephant, the director fled to Berlin with the animal. In September 2001 the circus went on tour again, sans elephant. Regular demos resumed. Circus workers reacted more violently than those in any other Austrian circus. On 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> September 2001, 15 activists were injured and needed hospital treatment, some for fractured bones. Although the activists' video camera had been smashed to bits, a 10 year old passer-by had filmed the attack so a prosecution seemed possible. The state prosecutor dropped the case. Two of those injured forced a civil law suit and in July 2003 the circus director was convicted and fined 1000 Euro and an additional 1000 Euro damages plus extra court costs. The continuing demos and the impending ban scheduled for 2005 took their toll: on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2002 the circus Billy-Wien sold its two female elephants to the German circus





Fliegenpilz. No Austrian circus now has wild animals and a total ban on their use is due in little more than a year.

The battle to ban battery farming is the biggest current campaign. 3 out of 9 provinces have banned battery farming already. Another province banned it in 2002 but arranged special phase-out times of up to 10 years for its remaining battery farms. So in February 2002 one such 'illegal' farm was occupied. A fifth province announced a ban on battery farms effective from 2004. On 17<sup>th</sup> March 2003, 7 hens were openly rescued from a battery farm. A couple of weeks later, the office of this province's governor was occupied, and 10 dead chickens from the battery farm left on his desk.

In July, 3 teams of activists made nightly visits to 47 of the largest Austrian battery farms across the country to gather film evidence. These farms are responsible for 40% of the entire national figure of battery hens. In 1999 the EC ruled that effective from 1st Jan 2003, 4 battery chickens at most would be allowed in each cage of typical Austrian cage size. Activists found that 79% of the battery farms they had visited were stocked illegally with at least 5 or even 6 hens per cage. A massive 91% of farms were at least partly overstocked. 71% of farms had very poor hygiene and 47% had dead chickens in the cages. All farms had sick and dying birds.

A dossier of photos and videos was compiled from the evidence gathered and copies distributed to the media and authorities. On the night of Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2003, activists undertook another open rescue of 9 battery chickens which was filmed by a TV camera crew. The chickens were driven immediately to a vet (with TV crew in tow), who declared the birds would have died had they not been removed. From 18<sup>th</sup> August onwards, daily demos were held, accompanied by video screenings of the local battery farms on a giant screen or TV set. A nationwide ban on battery farms is now a reality.

Meanwhile, the ALF has not been idle with more than 300 actions in some years; major fire-bombings claimed included:

- 2 April 2003: Gabersdorf; 3 hunting cabins burned down.
- 25 March 2003: Klagenfurt; 2 vehicles of the Austrian National Circus burned down. 40.000 Euro damage.
- 23 September 2002: Obertiefenbach; newly built pig factory burned down. 500.000 Euro damage.
- 1 April 2002: Vienna; truck of Austrian National Circus burned down.
- Mid May 2001: Biedermannsdorf; hunting platforms burned down.
- 3 July 2000: Linz; 7 incendiary devices burn a number of vehicles, the energy generator and the tent of the Austrian National Circus. 3 million Schilling damage.
- 5 January 2000: Pummersdorf; 20 incendiary devices in 5 broiler sheds, in a garage and underneath a tractor.
- 19 December 1999: Heidenreichstein; 1 incendiary device in the garage of the Austrian fur farmer, who had moved his farm into the Czech Republic. Did not ignite.
- 23 October 1999: Wampersdorf; down factory burned down. 100 million Schillings damage.
- September 1996: Auroldmünster; production and packaging hall of the battery farm of the company "Gansinger Gutshof-Ei" burned down. Very crude incendiaries on 4 transport lorries did not ignite.

The Austrian SHAC-group has been busy with home demos and demos against HLS clients. One anti-vivisection action took place on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2003. Just before 2 pm, about 35 activists entered the Institute for Cancer Research in Vienna. Meticulous forward planning ensured effortless access for the activists, most of whom headed for the animal area in the basement. Photos and 3 video films were taken, and 9 animals liberated. After 8 minutes activists left the scene; the police arrived within 11 minutes. 7 activists went to the 3rd floor offices of vivisector, Prof. Wolfgang Huber where they barricaded themselves in, hung a banner outside and used a megaphone to talk to the crowds gathering in the streets below. ( In September 2002, Huber had conducted coffee-experiments on 312 rats in which the rats were fed only coffee for 14 days and then cancer was induced in all of them. The animals were "terminated" on 28th April). Meanwhile, 4 activists had entered the lab to take pictures and check

documents; here they stumbled upon two vivisectors; one of them - Prof. Bursch, who infects animals with bacteria and studies the development of artificially-induced cancers in experimental animals - attacked an activist while another vivisector attacked them with pepper-spray. The activists escaped but the scientists reported to police that they had been attacked with a noxious gas. This meant the fire service had to be called, and the building had to be sealed off and evacuated; this gave the activists in the office the opportunity to use their megaphone and broadcast to the streets. More than 100 police and fire fighters gathered, dressed in chemical-proof clothes with gas masks and air-pressure bottles, a huge amount of equipment and at least 7 big fire engines. Fed with false information, the press were out in force in the mistaken belief that activists were threatening to release poisonous gas and that they had tried to abduct somebody. Even the anti-terrorist squad had been called!

After 2 1/2 hours, about 30 police wearing gas masks broke through the barricade. Three activists were arrested then released without charge the next morning. Meanwhile, the vivisector has started libel proceedings against the activists following their public disclosure of information pertaining to the case.

The Austrian animal rights movement is very much alive, fired up by the potential for forthcoming victories. Besides the major campaigns, there are many ongoing projects. Vegan summerfests organised by the Vegan Society of Austria (established in April 1999), have been held for the last six years around the country in the major cities and have attracted thousands of people. PETA Germany has declared Vienna - which boasts some 32 vegetarian and vegan restaurants - the veggie-friendliest city in Europe. In September 2002, the first national animal rights conference took place in Vienna, and was attended by 400 people. The next such conference is to be held in 2004, and is set to be an annual event. Animal rights activity continues to increase; in their state security report the police said that a third of all demos held in Austria are animal rights related. These are exciting times indeed!



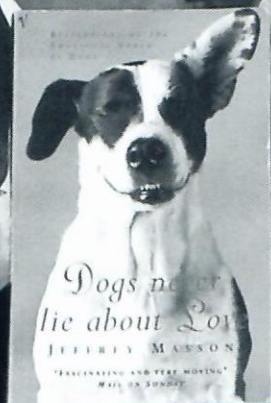
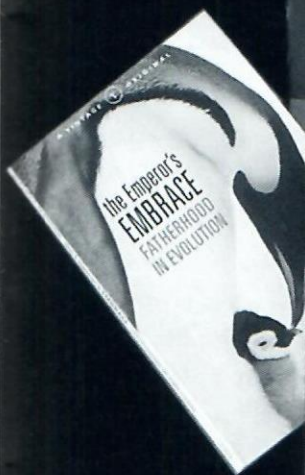
# JEFFREY MASSON AND HIS EMOTIONAL LIFE WITH ANIMALS

COMPILED BY GRETA LING FROM HER  
INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR OF THE

## EMOTIONAL LIVES OF ANIMALS

JEFFREY MASSON

The PIG  
Who Sang  
to the  
MOON



**J**effrey Masson will mean different things to different people. An internet search for his name will lead you to an impressive list of books on a variety of subjects as well as a brief history of his career as a former Professor of Sanskrit, a former psychoanalyst and controversial Freud scholar.

Several years ago, Masson moved from studying the minds of humans, to the realm of the emotional lives of non-human animals, a move he claims has made him vegan, and given him a renewed respect for the complexity of animal feelings.

When asked on the motivation behind the move, Masson states that he "became disillusioned with psychology and the study of humans and thought animals might be easier to understand". He recognises that whilst in one sense this has proved true, as non-human animals don't have hypocrisy and deceit, it can be hard to know what they're feeling especially when they are new to your life.

Jeffrey has found two rats - the most recent additions to his family - a lot less obvious and harder to understand than

past companions. On their arrival he was unsure how to play with a rat, how to give them

freedom whilst keeping them safe from harm or becoming lost.

He took them to his den, a large room where he works, shut the door and let them loose. Here they run around and chose to approach or sit with him. They are two characters, we are assured, who will be appearing in the book on which he is currently working.

Animals are present in Jeffrey's memory from early childhood, among them frogs, hamsters, birds, lizards and dogs; his house was always full of animals. He says of growing up that "I was lucky in that we had a resident guru, Paul Brunton, living with us, and although I now do not share his spiritual views, I do still resonate with his love and respect for all animals. He was a strict vegetarian".

As a child he was especially close to one particular dog, Taffy; they slept together and were always side-by-side. There were devastating effects when a 10-year-old Jeffrey had to cope with the death of Taffy, due to the consumption of poison that had been left out by someone in his neighbourhood. However whilst at age 63 Jeffrey laughs at the question of whether he has got over this, asked by a person who still wells up at the mention of her childhood canine companion, he speaks of other experiences that have had a longer lasting and profound effect on him.

The first is of a kitten who came to his home after being weaned too young from

her mother. She was named Bootsy, and would of a night, much to his mother's disgust, curl up in his arms and suckle his underarm. When Bootsy disappeared, a distraught Jeffrey was much relieved when she returned. But his joy was short-lived for she was soon to disappear again, never to return. It was some years later before it was revealed that his mother had, on both occasions, been the instrument of the disappearances and had, on the second occasion, driven Bootsy into the mountains and left her there. Masson speaks of the pain felt at the thought of Bootsy lost and looking for home.

His second tale is of two ducks who were entrusted to his neighbours during a vacation. On return when enquiring after the ducks, Masson was told "they were delicious." The betrayal of his childhood trust is something Masson says he has not got over.

It is encouraging to hear Jeffrey Masson predict that animal rights will happen eventually, but it may take another hundred years. Whilst recognising that, in the meantime, frustration may drive people to direct action, Masson feels this only serves to create a backlash. He feels it will be achieved through changes in the law taking place, speaking of work being done by Steven Wise in the USA and also the Great Ape Project, though he has a slight disagreement here as he states: "You should not single out a species, as we do not have the right to do that". He acknowledges, however, that "any improvement is good".

He recognises education as a key tool in achieving the aims of rights for animals. Stating that this can be brought about through the emergence of new literature such as Mathew Scully's 'Dominion' and his own newly released book 'The Pig who Sang to the Moon', a study of the emotional lives of farm animals. It was during his study for and the writing of this, his most recent book, that Masson made the leap to veganism.

His study into the emotional lives of animals began with his first book on the subject, 'When Elephants Weep', which examined the lives and behaviour of wild animals. In 'Dogs Never Lie About Love', he studied the lives of dogs, then examined the role of fatherhood in non-human animals in 'The Emperor's Embrace' and finally looked at cats in 'The Nine Emotional Lives of Cats'.

Masson is currently working on 'Raising the Peaceable Kingdom', focusing on raising a puppy, a kitten, two chicks, a rabbit and two rats together in the hopes that they will become best friends.

[www.jeffreymasson.com](http://www.jeffreymasson.com)



# UNILEVER REVISITED; 20 YEARS ON

**I think it was the 8<sup>th</sup> August 1984. It was a Sunday and it turned out to be the hottest day of the year - not really the best of weather for running round the grounds of Unilever laboratories at Sharnbrook in Bedfordshire in a balaclava!**

In 1984, the animal rights movement was less than a decade old. The eighties were the years of the leagues: The Northern Animal Liberation League (NALL), The South East Animal Liberation League (SEALL), The Central Animal Liberation League (CALL) and The Eastern Animal Liberation League (EALL).

League tactics differed from those of the ALF; their methodology depended on organising audacious raids in broad daylight using large numbers of activists who would swamp security - and hopefully evade the police!

The raid on Unilever labs was organised by The Eastern Animal Liberation League. NALL members who had been invited to participate travelled down in a van the day before to attend a meeting in a hall somewhere on the Saturday evening prior to the event. The meeting was attended by an impressive number of activists. All I can remember of the briefing on the raid was that the NALL was given the toughest

lab in the complex to penetrate. Perhaps our northern reputation went before us, as only a few months earlier the NALL had organised a raid on ICI at Alderley Edge! I recall saying to someone that local activists with a better knowledge of the laboratory grounds should have got that job and us a softer area! As we left the hall at the end of the briefing, Mr West (a pseudonym, as he was never arrested), told us that we should: "think of the animals."

How true that was and still is! But the raid on the labs was never to liberate animals (although I believe some rats may have been liberated); it was to liberate information on the activities of the fourth biggest multi-national in the world and what animals were being subjected to behind their closed doors.

We hit the entrance gate on the 8<sup>th</sup> in a convoy of vans. Getting through on foot wasn't a major obstacle. We then had to run up a drive to the laboratory buildings, which were a distance of some 1/4-1/2 mile. It was certainly a hot day, but a few people who didn't seem to have any sense of urgency (and pretty much just ambled the route) were a bit slow. We had been advised that we would have 30 or 40 minutes in the labs before Bedfordshire police got there so time was

of the essence. We reached a 12 foot steel or aluminium palisade fence which surrounded the labs. It was an amazing sight to see one activist with a petrol-driven stonecutter who was cutting sections in the fence to allow people access to the office area.

Once through the fence, doors were 'sledgehammered' into submission to gain access to office buildings. At some point a security car turned up; someone lobbed a sledgehammer at it and it disappeared as fast as it came. I guess they must've figured they didn't get paid for trying to apprehend up to 150 determined hooded activists!

With the thirty minutes time limit up, it was time to disappear. We had been told where to leave and where cars would pick us up, but after 30 minutes we could hear or see the places on the outskirts starting to fill up with the law. The group I was in decided to head for Santa Pod drag car racecourse, which was another pick up point. It was 2 or 3 miles across country. We got there and hung about for a short while until a van picked us up and that's where our problems started.

Leaving the course, we ran into a police roadblock where we were stopped. While our driver was being questioned, I



remember saying to a few people in the van that we should make a run for it while we had the chance, but there was an air of resignation; perhaps people were just tired or had run out of adrenalin. Maybe they thought the police wouldn't be able to charge us with offences as we were seven road miles away from the raid! Really we should never have been arrested. We should have taken our chances and made a run for it from the police roadblock or been as smart as other activists. Someone had been taken ill at Santa Pod. An ambulance was called and several activists got in the ambulance with the sick person. The ambulance went through the police blocks and thus they evaded arrest. In our case, however, police reinforcements arrived and we were all detained at Bedfordshire police station for around 26 hours.

The police finally released us from custody barefooted! (They kept our shoes for forensic tests); we were charged with conspiracy to burgle and conspiracy to cause criminal damage. I believe virtually everyone answered "no comment" when interrogated. (During our subsequent trial, Pert the prosecutor even alleged this was a conspiracy!)

We were on police bail for nearly two years until April 1986. In all, 41 people were arrested, but a lot of activists carrying a lot of files did manage to evade the police. Indeed, someone who worked in a well-known anti-vivisection organisation told me that a decade after the raid, information taken from Unilever was still being used.

No one could have predicted Bedfordshire police's effective response to the Unilever raid. Police attending the ICI raid only four months earlier had been less effective and they didn't arrest everyone they could have arrested. A short time after the ICI raid, activists who had been inside the labs got out and then joined the demonstration at the main gate. Perhaps that's what created some complacency at Unilever.

## The Trials

During police bail the prosecution claimed over £40,000 damage was carried out. At trial it was accepted as £14,000 or £18,000.

They split us into three trials, the first two were at Northampton Crown Court and ours was at Leicester. The first two had opposing outcomes. Trial one, all were guilty but two. Trial two, all were acquitted but three.

**"...the raid on the labs was never to liberate animals; it was to liberate information on the activities of the fourth biggest multinational in the world and what animals were being subjected to behind their closed doors."**

In our trial there appeared to be less evidence on us, but Pert the prosecutor had a sympathetic jury and convicted thirteen out of fourteen of us, even though there appeared less evidence on most than on people in the second trial! Before the trial it seemed to me that two conspiracy charges weren't that serious since all the evidence on us was circumstantial. However as our trial progressed

and Pert linked it all together, it started to look damning: i.e. activists from different parts of the country arrested together in a van, pictures of individuals on security film were alleged to be some of the accused, cuts on shoes were alleged to relate to broken glass from office and lab windows. In all, twenty seven out of the forty were guilty... Tragically, Andy of Bristol died whilst on bail.

In our six week trial there were light moments. One barrister told his client his 'performance' in the witness box, was the worst he'd had the misfortune to witness! It wasn't unusual for people to nod off in the airless, hot courtroom. On the back row of three, four of us were more hidden from Judge Wild's beady eyes. In one session, I woke myself up, by banging my head on the wall behind me, only to see the other three deep in slumber! One of the prosecution witnesses related how they confronted people in balaclavas in the grounds of Unilever by saying "if you're so proud of what you're doing take off your hoods." "What was the reply?" asked Pert. "F..k off you stupid bag!"

The Manchester contingency of four decided on a similar defence story, which was that we went for a peaceful occupation and once inside the lab complex we saw things we hadn't expected and left as soon as possible! It pretty much wrecked our admittedly weak defence, when the fourth defendant (a well known activist of present day campaigns, claimed he saw sledgehammers and balaclavas from the outset at the entrance gate. His defence was he didn't enter the grounds, but went around the perimeter fence to escape the trouble. (He even returned to Unilever while under police bail to memorise his escape route for his court story). His was the only not-guilty verdict, probably because he had a more plausible story and because he was but sixteen or seventeen at the time!

With the benefit of hindsight and if I had known that another option existed, as adopted by the women who damaged the Hawk jet in the mid-90s, I would have



taken it. Their plea was one of not guilty on the grounds that their actions were motivated by the attempt to prevent a greater crime of genocide in East Timor. Crown Court is no place to fabricate a story and as Pert the prosecutor said to me when cross-examining: "that's not the truth Mr Cooper is it!" Yet on sentencing he passed his regards on to me via my relatives, so I think he respected us all in some way. Unlike Judge Wild. After spending five or six weeks on Judge's remand (found guilty, awaiting sentencing), we were hauled before him for sentencing and a lecture. *"You are not friends of society. You are enemies of it, that I believe is your true purpose."*

***Quite a compliment to be called an enemy of a society that views animals as utilities or products. I may have it inscribed on my tombstone!***

So all those idealistic people who swamped Unilever labs in August 1984, I salute you. We were young! The movement was young, we inevitably made mistakes, but the courts feared our audacity. To try and prevent similar raids, they sentenced 25 people to imprisonment of over forty years (two received suspended sentences). I believe we are still the greatest number of people to face the same conspiracy charges in Britain. The heavy sentencing seemed to work too. The NALL was finished, as were the other leagues (although The Central Animal Liberation League was to continue a little longer). The Leagues had worked and served their time. Perhaps the end of the leagues prompted an even more radical approach and more damage to animal abusers was to follow by the ALF. Around the same period hunt saboteurs (who began fighting back too!) became less inclined to tolerate being hospitalised.

To this day, 20 years on, thirty minutes inside Unilever is still one of the most empowering thirty minutes I've had in my life. The subsequent 2 year prison sentence of which I served eight months wasn't fun but it was educational. Prison wasn't palatable, but I chewed it and digested it. I came out with renewed determination.

Only a few years after prison, what really hurt and offended far more than HMP, was when the police and the CPS decided once again to take me to Crown Court. They tried to convict me again with a blatantly trumped up and extremely distasteful charge, if they had succeeded it would have discredited the movement I was part of and the personal repercussions would have made it unlikely I would still be around, to write this article now. As it was, I was found 'not guilty' by a unanimous verdict. Crown Court is no place to lie as stated previously.

**“ So all those idealistic people who swamped Unilever labs in August 1984, I salute you. We were young! The movement was young, we inevitably made mistakes, but the courts feared our audacity. ”**

The spirit will never be defeated!

Alan Cooper - Cetacea Defence

*Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that all was vanity but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men for they may act their dream with open eyes and make it possible. T.E.Lawrence*

William Lever founded the Lever Brothers Empire on 'Sunlight' soap in the 1880s. The search for raw materials took him to Africa where he found the indigenous system of production "miserably inefficient". He felt that "natives should be treated as willing children, housed, schooled, doctored and moved from place to place as might be required. Above all, they should be taught the value of regular habits and of working to time."

**The Empire of Evil -** Unilever is the world's largest food company. It dominates the market world-wide in consumer goods and has organised the world into a global supermarket for its products. It ruthlessly exploits animals and people in its unceasing search for profits, which means turning natural resources as cheaply as possible into expensive, packaged commodities. From London Greenpeace web-site Unilever brands: Axe, Bertolli, Birds Eye, Cif, Comfort, Domestos, Dove, Family Brand, Findus, Healthy Heart, Heart, Hellman's, Iglo, Knorr, Lipton, Lux, Omo, Pond's, Radiant, Rexona, Signal, Slim-fast, Sunsilk, Surf, UBF Food Solutions



# News in brief



## PIG FARMERS FLOUT EUROPEAN BANS

Pig farmers are ignoring European bans and potential risks to human health by increasing their use of antibiotics to force animals to grow unnaturally quickly. The industry has more than doubled its use of the drugs since 1998, with breeders using a loophole, which allows them to dose animals with antibiotics if the drugs are prescribed by a vet. The number of pigs in the UK has decreased by a third since 1999. At that time, four antibiotics were banned in animal feed to reduce the risk of antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria developing. Figures obtained by the association show the amount of antibiotics prescribed by vets has risen from 23 tons in 1998, to 55 tons in 2001 - after the feed ban was introduced.

## ANYONE FOR GUINNESS?

In a study led by Professor John Folts, researchers at the University of Wisconsin carried out laboratory tests comparing the health benefits of Guinness with Heineken. They fed beer to dogs with clogged arteries, and then measured the effects on the stickiness of their blood-clotting cells. The results showed only those dogs fed Guinness had reduced clotting activity making them less likely to have a heart attack.

## SNIFFER RATS

Rats are being used to sniff out landmines in Mozambique. Gambian giant pouched rats, too light to trigger mines, are sent out on a line and can sniff out explosives. They are rewarded with food and have more stamina and concentration than dogs. In a test in November along a southern Mozambique railway heavily mined during the country's 17-year civil war, teams of three giant pouched rats found every one of 20 live mines in a previously unsurveyed 4,300-square-foot area.

## KARMA?

A captive bear kept at a Central Russian hunting lodge for the purpose of training hunting dogs killed the chairman of the Tambov Regional Hunting and Fishing Society. Lodge employees found Vladimir Mamontov's body in the lodge to which he had managed to flee after he had apparently been attacked by one of two bears kept at the lodge when he approached to feed it. The society had just celebrated its 115th anniversary and awarded Mamontov the title of Russia's Distinguished Huntsman. A pretty short-lived title it appears...

## APOLOGY FROM THE BBC

The BBC Governors warned the Radio 4 Today programme to ensure accuracy and fairness to contributors after upholding part of a complaint from an anti-vivisection group. In the first major ruling involving the current-affairs programme since the Hutton report, the Governors issued a rebuke to the programme's editors. Andrew Tyler, director of Animal Aid, complained that his case had been misrepresented in a January report about Cambridge University's decision not to pursue plans to create a primate research centre. The BBC Governors' Programme Complaints Unit found that the report failed to properly distance Animal Aid from violent anti-vivisection activists, unfairly questioned Mr Tyler's scientific credentials and featured "clumsy editing" of his comments. The Today programme has apologised to Mr Tyler. The Governors said: "Editors and producers on the programme have been reminded to ensure accuracy and fairness to contributors at all times".

## SOMETHING FISHY

Findings by a group of three leading scientists from the universities of Edinburgh, St Andrew's in Scotland and the University of Leeds suggest that fish do not deserve their reputation as the dimwits of the animal kingdom. Far from being instinct-driven dunces held back by a three-second memory, they say fish are cunning, manipulative, cultured and socially aware and that their intelligence favourably compares to that of non-human primates. They believe that the psychological and mental abilities of fish have hitherto been vastly underrated and that they are socially intelligent beings, capable of Machiavellian ingenuity, of exercising punishment, reconciliation and co-operation. Recent research showed fish could recognise "shoal mates" and were aware of the "social prestige" of others. They had also been observed using tools and showed impressive long-term memories, the scientists said.



# News in brief

## SENIOR CRUFTS FIGURES RESIGN

The chairman of Crufts and his wife, the Best in Show judge, resigned from the Kennel Club earlier this year. Peter and Joyce Mann stepped down after the world's canine press received anonymous letters accusing Mrs Mann of being involved in "puppy farming" in the 1960s. The row had threatened to undermine this year's show in March, and the Kennel Club were forced to fill the posts with temporary replacements. Those behind the campaign searched Kennel Club records to establish that Mrs Mann had bred large numbers of puppies in the late 1960s and 1970s. In 1971, she registered 23 litters and 126 puppies, some of which were sold to traders. Puppy farming is now considered unethical although its practise is still widespread; canine laws prevent a bitch over eight years old being used for breeding, and any bitch breeding more than two litters a year. Monitoring this is quite another matter. The Kennel Club's final word was that there was "a very different culture" in the 1960s and that Mrs Mann, who is retired and lives in Edinburgh, had done nothing wrong.

## JAPAN'S LAST WILD-BORN CRESTED IBIS KILLS ITSELF

Japan's last wild-born rare crested ibis died recently in captivity. Rapid industrial development brought the species to virtual extinction as rice paddy pesticides and deforestation destroyed its habitat and food supply. The crested ibis - with its snowy, pink-tinged feathers, red face and sloping black beak - was once a common sight in fields all over the country and a favourite of scroll painters. The Environment Ministry said the bird, named Kin, had appeared to be in good health, but was found dead by a caretaker on her remote island home. Officials say the bird apparently flung herself headfirst into the cage door causing a brain haemorrhage but said the reason why she had done this was unclear... Thoughts, anyone?

## FEARS OVER NEW BOVINE BRAIN DISEASE

Scientists are concerned at the potential threat to humans from a mysterious brain condition that paralysed and killed a young cow. Tests for various known bovine diseases have all proved negative. The Veterinary Laboratories Agency is now trying to pin down the cause of the disease, which has been described as a type of cattle polio. At present there is no evidence to suggest a risk to humans, but scientists are not ruling it out given that it is widely believed that the brain disease vCJD originally passed to humans who consumed meat from cows infected with the closely related condition BSE.

## AFRICAN LIONS IN DANGER OF EXTINCTION

According to a British Scientist, unless rural Africans stand to benefit far more from ecotourism, the rapid decline of the continent's remaining lions will continue. Fewer than 20,000 lions may now survive in the whole of Africa, and although they do not face immediate extinction, the greatest threats to their species are sport hunting and conflict with farmers over livestock. The study showed that lions are rapidly declining in many of the remoter parts of Africa outside the tourist spotlight. The estimate of 20,000 lions or fewer compares with a population that stood at around 200,000 in the early 1980s.

## MAD SCIENCE

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) tested 12 anti-cancer drugs on mice that are already being used successfully in the treatment of humans. The scientists took mice that were growing 48 different kinds of human cancers and treated them with the drugs. They found that 30/48 times the drugs were ineffective in the mice. In other words, 63% of the time the mice models with human tumours inaccurately predicted the human response.

## GLOBAL WARMING THREATENS SHEEP

The Bluetongue virus, one of the most feared animal diseases in the world and second only to foot-and-mouth in terms of its virulence, is allegedly heading towards Britain as a result of global warming. When bluetongue infects a flock of sheep, it kills or seriously harms up to 70 per cent of the animals. According to Philip Mellor, a virologist at the Government's Pirbright Laboratory in Guildford, Surrey, it is posing a real threat to Britain's 40 million-strong flocks. Biting midges spread the virus from one sheep to another, causing blindness, bleeding in the mouth and lameness. Bluetongue normally extends no further than northern Africa, but over the past decade it has spread into most areas of southern and central Europe and is now poised to enter Britain.







## UNDERCOOKED BEEF HAZARDOUS TO CHILDREN

New research shows that children who eat undercooked beef are at risk of being infected with a bug that can cause lasting kidney problems. Undercooked beef and other foods can be contaminated with the E. coli bacteria. Infection causes diarrhoea and other debilitating symptoms such as vomiting, cramps, and fever. One in ten children are also likely to develop a serious disease called haemolytic uremic syndrome or HUS, known to be the most common cause of acute kidney failure in children. Long-term kidney damage is likely in those who recover.

## CHURCH OF HUNTING

A group of hunting enthusiasts is setting up its own "church" in an attempt to stop the Government from banning their favourite field sport. The founders of the Free Church of Country Sports, whose supporters include a barrister, a publisher and several businessmen, claim that fox hunting is part of their religion and that legislation to ban it would be an infringement of their rights



as a religious minority. The "founding fathers" - Rod Brammer, Vic Gardner, John Milne and Doug Ross - are now preparing a recruitment drive designed to swell their congregation from several dozen to at least 7,000. The aim is to gain official recognition as a new religion. Notices calling for people to join the new church are being placed in shooting shops and distributed at country fairs.

## SURPRISE, SURPRISE

53-year old millionaire Mr Gorran is suing the Dr Robert Atkins diet. He claimed it clogged his arteries, forcing him to undergo an angioplasty. Tests showed he had a 99% blockage in a major artery 2 years after embarking on the meat diet. Gorran blames the high-protein, low carbohydrate foods for his dangerously high levels of cholesterol, which shot up from a near normal 146 to a dangerously high 230 only two months after commencing the diet in 2001. Two years into the regime, he began experiencing chest pains, so why on earth did he stay on the diet for 2 years if the warning signs were already there after two months? He is seeking \$15,000 damages and an injunction on Atkins Nutritionals promoting the diet and wants cholesterol warning labels put on products and books. The Physicians Committee For Responsible Medicine, an advocacy group that supports a vegan diet, is assisting him in his case



# News in brief



## BROKEN RECORD, MUCH

The June 10, 2004 issue of the *International Journal of Cancer* contains one of the largest studies in the history of humankind (80,326 participants). The study links the consumption of milk and dairy products to increased risk of ovarian cancer. The link had already been made fifteen years earlier in the

British journal *Lancet* (1989, Volume 2) which reported that Galactose is linked both to ovarian cancer and infertility and that women with a regular consumption of dairy products triple the risk of ovarian cancer as against those who do not. The *American Journal of Epidemiology* (Volume 150) also observed in 1999 that poor absorption of lactose could double the risk of ovarian cancer in women

## AUSTRIA LEADS THE WORLD IN ANIMAL PROTECTION LEGISLATION

Chickens can no longer be kept in cages and dogs cannot be restrained by choke collars under animal protection laws passed by the Austrian parliament on 27th May. The legislation, which is the strictest in the world, has been under discussion for more than 20 years. It is also illegal to place animals in the care of minors, to display pets in shop windows or to use wild animals in circus acts or other spectacles. Cattle may not be tethered with rope, and the use of electric shocks to train animals as well as the docking of tails or ears are all forbidden. Some politicians wept as a comfortable majority passed the law following a 5-hour debate, while others waved soft toys in celebration. Animal rights groups welcomed the changes to the law.

## CALIFORNIA TO PHASE OUT FORCE FEEDING OF BIRDS FOR FOIE GRAS

The California Senate voted on 18th May to approve SB 1520, a bill that would ban the force-feeding of ducks and geese and sales of foie gras from force-fed animals in California. Authored by Senate President Pro Tem John Burton, SB 1520 got the necessary 21 votes to pass. SB 1520 was due to head to the Assembly for a legislative hearing sometime in June. During the Senate legislative hearing in April, the bill was amended to include a 7?-year phase out period before the law takes effect. Currently, there is only one California farm, near Stockton, which uses force-feeding to produce foie gras. But other businesses have indicated an interest in opening foie gras farms in California. Four animal protection groups are sponsoring SB 1520. They include: the Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights, Farm Sanctuary, Viva!USA, and Los Angeles Lawyers for Animals.





## DIARIES OF DESPAIR

The House of Commons Home Affairs Committee will not be investigating the Home Office's misconduct revealed by the Diaries of Despair. Despite Uncaged's intense lobbying,

supported by hundreds of members of the public and several MPs, the Committee has turned its back on its duty to hold the Government to account for wrongdoing. The Home Office has not been cleared, and the scandal remains unresolved. The Committee's reasons for not proceeding with an inquiry included its existing workload and the complex task of investigating events that happened a few years ago. By pointing to the time elapsed since these events took place, the Committee effectively rewards the abuse of power indulged in by Imutran/Novartis and the Home Office who have engineered delays to prevent independent scrutiny. Extraordinarily, the Home Office has since promoted one of the principal culprits, former Chief Inspector Jon Richmond.

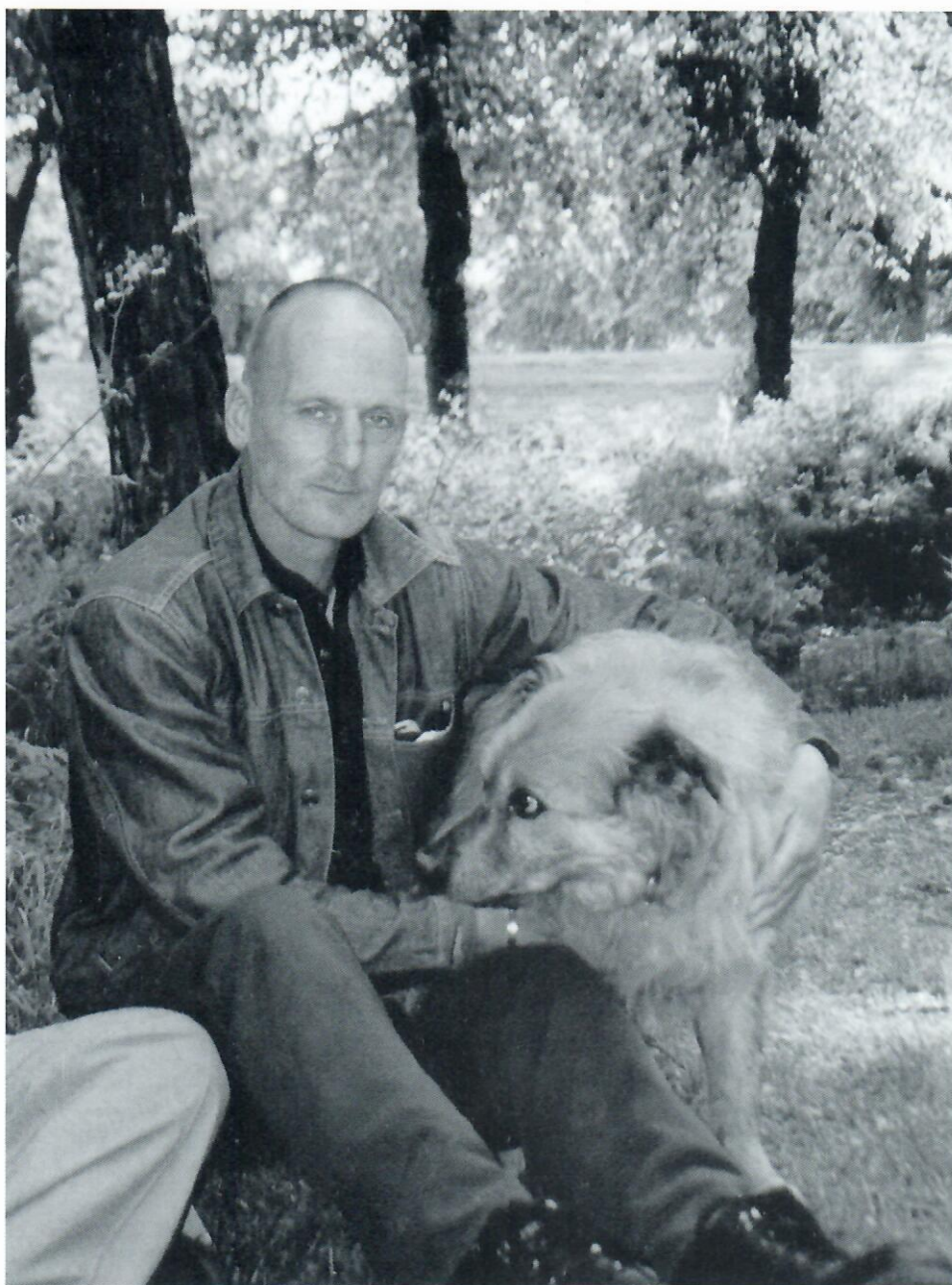


## ROBINS ENDANGER PUBLIC HEALTH

An investigation is under way after a garden centre in South Gloucestershire was allegedly allowed to kill nesting robins considered "a pest". Wyevale garden centre in Milbury Heath near Thornbury reportedly destroyed two chicks, an adult and the nest. The birds were already hatched and thus some two weeks from leaving the nest. It was given permission and a licence for the killing by the Department of Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), who alleged the application had been considered by an experienced wildlife manager. The government department is now looking into the matter after the RSPCA voiced its concerns. RSPCA Inspector Glyn Roberts was called to the centre after being tipped off. According to the centre's manager, the birds had been flying in and out of the cafeteria via air vents and were considered a health hazard; they had also apparently been triggering burglar alarm sensors. Arthur Lindley, the director of science for the RSPCA, told Radio 4's Today programme that any risk that the robins posed to public health would have been "vanishingly small" and that it was incumbent on the Government before issuing such a licence to make sure that alternative measures have been tried first, which they had not. The killing of robins is only permitted where there is considered to be a genuine threat to public health or safety and where all other practical alternatives have been tried and failed or are considered ineffective. Well that's all right then!







# MAKING WAVES

*In a candid interview with Arkangel, seasoned Animal Rights campaigner Mel Broughton discusses his views on the movement, the part he believes direct action plays in it and his hopes for the future of Animal Liberation.*

**A.** Hi Mel. Good to have you on board for this issue of Arkangel to answer some questions. You are widely known within the movement as having a deep commitment to the cause and have been involved in the struggle for animal

liberation for many years in all aspects of campaigning. You have seen a lot of changes in attitudes within the movement and towards it; could you tell us a little about how you first became involved and what shaped your views?

**MB.** My introduction to the animal rights movement came in the form of a leaflet I took from someone in Northampton one Saturday afternoon in 1980. It was a leaflet about vivisection and I read it as I walked. It felt like the wake-up call for which I had been waiting all my life. I walked straight back to the woman who had handed me the leaflet and asked when the next local group meeting was. My gut feelings about animal cruelty had always been very strong but I lacked any real understanding of vivisection, the meat trade and other animal abuse issues. Mixing with people at those early meetings began my education and I quickly became involved in local campaigns and national demos, travelling every weekend to attend demonstrations all over the country. My views during the early 1980s were very much shaped by the 'direct action' arm of the movement. I read about the exploits of the ALF and the emerging Animal Liberation Leagues and felt the incredible sense of excitement and energy that infected the movement at that time. My first taste of 'direct action' came when I started to go out hunt sabbing. I met people through sabbing who were to become great friends and effective animal liberation activists. At that time it was difficult not to be swept along with the buzz that was so evident among animal rights people. I attended large demonstrations and met many people. I began to think increasingly of becoming involved in 'direct action'.

**A.** You are currently actively involved working with two organisations: ARC (Animal Rights Coalition) and SPEAK. Can you tell us a little about the work you are doing with these organisations and give us some background information about them, as well as their long-term aims?

**MB.** The victory over Cambridge University, and our success at stopping its plans to build Europe's largest primate lab was a great moment for the movement, and it was as a result of efforts by all sections of the animal liberation movement that we defeated not only the university but the government as well. The animal rights movement has made enormous inroads into the animal abuse industries and we are entering very



exciting times. We have never before seen the animal abusers and their friends in government fight so hard to keep us at bay.

The work already done by SHAC, SNGP and the local activists under the X-Cape banner laid the foundations for SPEAC to draw together the movement and mount a united front to prevent the lab from becoming a reality. SPEAK campaigns has now evolved from that beginning and is actively fighting Oxford University in its attempts to construct a new animal lab. It is a continuation of what was started at Cambridge and the lessons we learnt during that campaign will inform and help us to develop future campaigns. The organisation will continue to be an integral part of the grass roots animal rights movement and in the longer term we will be looking at opening other fronts as part of a wider campaigning base.

The Animal Rights Coalition has always played a central role in bringing together various arms of the animal rights movement and I see no change in that idea, but we have to adapt to changing times and campaigning ideas. The ARC banner has huge potential as a forum for the movement to develop and it is one that can go beyond just a swap shop for campaigns. ARC has to be forward looking and in a position to offer campaigners a forum that excites as well as informs. At the end of the day people should leave ARC meetings feeling they have gained something as activists as well as a new set of diary dates.

**A.** You have openly supported direct action over the years while maintaining close connections to legal campaigning. You have stated on a number of occasions that direct action is an integral part of furthering advancement in our struggle. Do you believe that the radical message which is disseminated by direct action can be a deterrent to potential 'sympathy votes' fearful of anarchy as some have argued, or that this is scare-mongering by those who do not have an understanding of the way political movements have been shaped throughout history?

**MB.** I have been and remain a staunch supporter of 'direct action', whilst still understanding the vital work done by those who operate inside the legal framework. It has always been my belief that movements like ours are at our strongest when activists from all walks work together in order to defeat animal abuse. We have in the past seen some

brilliant examples of this. The Animal Liberation Leagues of the mid 1980s combined 'direct action' with local campaigning to bring animal abuse to a massive audience. Meticulous planning and some real media savvy brought vivisection into the homes of millions and brought many new recruits into the movement. The ALF of the time were also given wide publicity and a high level of support from within the wider animal liberation movement.

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**“ The fight  
against  
vivisection has  
never been more  
intensive and  
the damage  
caused to the  
animal abuse  
industries by  
SHAC, SNGP and  
SPEAK goes way  
beyond what is  
apparent on the  
surface... ”**

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It has been said some forms of 'direct action' carried out by the ALF and others have been counter-productive. This criticism seems to have really come about as a result of the use of arson as a tactic. I think you only have to look at your history books to see that no movement has achieved its goal without the use of some form of what is popularly termed as 'extremism'. I think the public's attitude to A/R activism has changed due to the radical nature of some 'actions' but change is seldom brought about as a result of pen pushing alone. It is inevitable in any struggle for a just cause that acts are committed which are deemed 'unacceptable' by society at large.

**A.** Do you believe that the phenomenally high sentencing of animal rights 'offenders' has been a deterrent to potential activists or that the downturn of direct action in this country is simply a reflection of the fluctuating nature of all movements for change?

**MB.** I think the answer to that is 'a bit of both'. There is little doubt that lengthy prison sentences can be a deterrent but it is equally true that they come as a result of a period of very successful 'direct action'. No movement can sustain a high level of direct action without the resultant backlash from the authorities but what I find so encouraging about the animal rights movement is its ability to bounce back and look at other tactics. Society does change and our movement will continue to adapt and develop in its campaigning strategies; 'direct action' in some shape or form will undoubtedly continue to be one of the methods used in achieving progress. I think each successive stage of the animal liberation struggle will present us with tactical challenges but I personally feel groups and individuals with a commitment to direct action around the world will continue to play a vital role in achieving animal liberation. If you look at history, no movement has achieved its goal without using some form of direct action and, given the scale on which animal abuse exists, it's difficult to imagine how we could, as a movement, achieve what we have without the influence of direct action.

**A.** You spent a number of years in prison; your first conviction was for the attempted liberation of Rocky the dolphin (which you documented in Issue 27), the publicity from which resulted in his release back into the wild in the Turks and Caicos Islands after 20 years' incarceration in a concrete prison. Is this where you first started to look at the importance of grass roots and national organisations joining forces to achieve a common goal?

**MB.** I would say that the attempted liberation of 'Rocky' the dolphin started something that showed just how effective we can be when different strategies complement each other. Although the illegal action failed in its original aim, it sparked off a campaign by grass roots A/R campaigners that achieved a major victory not just for 'Rocky' but it sounded the 'death knell' for all dolphinariums in this country. It also drew in national organisations that were given a platform to launch campaigns that gathered public support and made it impossible for performing dolphin shows to continue.



This particular campaign certainly illustrated what can be achieved when grass roots activism gets the support of national organisations. I think the grass roots campaigners also act as recruiting agents for the big organisations by disseminating their leaflets on stalls and continually raising the profile of animal rights issues. Once again, it comes down to fighting animal abuse on all levels and that is most effectively achieved by all groups within the movement respecting that we are moving towards a common goal.

**A.** After a number of minor convictions for breach of the peace, you most recently served 4 years for conspiracy to commit arson and have now been out of prison for two years. How did this time affect the way you view the way forward for the movement?

**MB.** My time in prison gave me a unique opportunity to look at the movement from outside and to examine my own views as to what should be the way forward. I think our movement is like all other movements in that we have to adapt to changing times. Just because one form of action gives way to another does not mean we are not being effective. As I have said earlier, direct action comes in many forms and for tactical reasons it may be that one tactic fits a particular campaign and time better than one previously adopted. I don't accept the argument that some forms of ALF action have damaged the movement. It seems to me that taken in its totality, the animal liberation movement would not have achieved what it has done so far without the presence of the ALF. I am hugely optimistic about the future of the animal liberation struggle and I believe we are entering a very critical period in our development. The fight against vivisection has never been more intensive and the damage caused to the animal abuse industries by SHAC, SNGP and SPEAK goes way beyond what is apparent on the surface. I think we have a movement that is more intelligent and more focused than ever before. Lessons have been learnt and there is a real sense of determination to see it through. You only have to look at the efforts by the government to stifle protest and the media's blatant attempts to cast us as lunatics to realise that these are signs of desperation in the face of an unstoppable force.

**A.** You knew Barry Horne; can you tell us what you believe his personal contribution was to the development of the history of what is, after all, a movement still in its infancy? Some would argue that portraying him as a hero is counter-productive, yet

surely the very fact that he was a man like any other makes his sacrifice extraordinary, regardless of whether one wholeheartedly supported all his actions, or not. If nothing else, he has left us a legacy of some profound and moving writings which demonstrate how deep and complete his commitment was to the cause of animal liberation - we would surely all do well to remind ourselves what real commitment is about. Summoning up the courage to commit can sometimes mean making personal sacrifices, but without it the animals will have no champions to fight their corner. What do you believe to be the most effective means of encouraging people to find the anger necessary to fuel that power base within themselves?

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**" ... I think we have a movement that is more intelligent and more focused than ever before. "**

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**MB.** Barry was above all else an ordinary man who made an extraordinary sacrifice for the cause of animal liberation. I think his legacy for the history of the A/R movement is twofold. On one level he raised the profile of animal abuse to national and international levels, by the actions he took and his subsequent hunger strikes. He also acted as a rallying figure for many in our movement. Whether or not you use the word hero, the fact remains that he allowed his life to become the focus for intense and passionate public protest as he fought the government over their broken promises on vivisection.

The personal sacrifices that Barry made were enormous. He was a family man who had two children and he had a great sense of humour once you got to know him. Once again you return to the same thread that runs through all great movements and that is the one of personal sacrifice for the greater good and in that respect Barry will stand alongside some very distinguished

people. Barry wrote a great deal about commitment and determination in the animal liberation movement but he was clear that commitment does not necessarily mean doing what he did, but rather the commitment to fight with all your energy in whatever way you do it.

Barry's legacy to the movement is felt in all our actions. He is someone we will continue to talk about and remember and in that very real sense his influence remains very much alive and is a tribute to a truly heroic figure. I think the answer to the question about people finding the necessary anger to fuel their own power base lies in the realisation that they **can** make a difference. Anger is of little use if it remains an emotion locked inside; to the animals in labs, slaughterhouses, fur farms or on the hunting field, your anger at their plight means nothing unless it becomes action on their behalf. Once you decide to actively fight for animals, you are no longer a passive observer and with that comes a sense that you are part of something bigger. I would say to people: look at what we have achieved already - Consort beagle breeders, Hillgrove cat farm, Regal Rabbits, Shamrock Farm - all closed; HLS on their knees, Cambridge University and its government allies confronted and beaten. If you need to find the power base within, then it lies in the knowledge that we are winning a war against all odds and Barry understood that more than most.

**A.** Finally, what are your hopes for the future of the movement and what, if any, radical advances do you foresee being made in our lifetime in the way animals are viewed?

**MB.** My hopes for the future are being realised all the time. Our movement has been radical in its advancement of the animal liberation ethic and I don't see any reason for that to change. The way animals are viewed by wider society is changing all the time and that is in a very large part due to the efforts of the animal liberation movement. Animals and the way they are treated is no longer something that is relegated to a few well meaning people collecting for homeless cats and dogs. The issues surrounding the rights of animals are now the subject of serious debate and even law. One of the biggest challenges facing us is to push for lawmakers and politicians to face up to their duty and give non human animals the protection they deserve as sentient beings. The animal liberation movement has a radical message to deliver and we still have a long way to go but I have a huge faith and pride in the ability of our movement to see it through.



They poisoned them, beat them, burned them, hunted them, shot them, tormented them,  
deprived them, whipped them, starved them, drowned them,  
gassed them, hung them, stabbed them and fought them.

That's what happened to hundreds of thousands of animals today in the UK.

We know because we were there.

# AIE

Uncovering - Exposing - Educating

**Animal Investigations Europe** is a new organisation, but the work that we do has been going on for many years. In some cases, it has been the catalyst for a massive campaign against an establishment or individuals that have been under investigation and better still, has even resulted in their closure or prosecution. Undercover investigations provide vital information and hard evidence about the unseen cruelties that we know go on behind closed doors but which cannot be substantiated without documented proof. Members of our organisation provide exactly that.

Our investigations, many of which have been undertaken on behalf of national Animal Rights campaign groups, have covered a broad spectrum of animal abuse issues; some of these investigations have been lengthy and resulted in high profile media publicity. We have trailed live export trucks through Europe, filmed the slaughter of sheep, cattle and goats in Spanish and Greek abattoirs in order to gather ammunition that could be used in the fight to stop this vile industry. We have followed and infiltrated many hunts across the UK and Ireland, obtaining evidence of the barbaric practices of terrier work and the unforgivable cruelty inflicted upon foxes and stags. We have filmed unwanted hunting dogs hanging from trees in the forests of Spain, thus exposing a practice which had until then been denied by Spanish hunting clubs. We have worked undercover in the animal circus world for notorious animal trainer Mary Chipperfield; the footage and evidence we gathered was later used in the convictions of three people. We have infiltrated laboratories and obtained heartbreaking proof of the true extent of torture and misery inflicted upon animals in places such as Hazleton UK primate lab and the now closed Shamrock Monkey Farm. We have worked in many factory farms - among them Bernard Mathews' turkey processing unit - where we have witnessed and filmed the daily grind of death and appalling suffering of thousands of birds. A recent investigation into Scotts Pigs, the biggest producer of pigs in Scotland, uncovered shocking evidence of cruelty, malpractice and abysmal hygiene. The



resulting flood of media publicity and public outrage was swiftly followed by the withdrawal of the company's quality meat assurance certificate and subsequent liquidation. Most recently, we uncovered the truth behind the game bird industry, one of the biggest and most secretive of the factory farming industries. What we disclosed shocked even veteran campaigners: millions of birds destined for shooting estates in the UK reared in intensive conditions, laying birds kept in battery cages, high fatalities, starvation and cannibalism.

The above list of the work we have undertaken is not exhaustive but it gives an idea of the nature of that work and of its vital importance to the Animal Rights movement, a fact that tends to be overlooked because we work behind the scenes.

Although we cannot guarantee a direct causal link

between the possible demise of an establishment and our investigative work as in some of the above examples, we **can** guarantee that we will continue to disclose the truth and provide the movement with the information it needs to wage the war against animal abuse. Most projects are funded by national Animal Rights groups and the material is passed onto them for campaigning and political lobbying. The aim of AIE, however, is to work more independently and to help the smaller organisations that cannot afford the specialised equipment necessary to undertake such investigations. There are also key areas we have identified which desperately need addressing and - with little effort in some cases - a lot could be achieved by highlighting and possibly correcting the cruelty issues concerned. All this needs money and the expensive high-tech equipment that is essential to our investigations. Due to the covert nature of AIE's work, sourcing funding for our own investigative projects is difficult. **It's as simple as this: Uncovering the truth and exposing the lies is what we are about and with your support, we will continue to do the job no matter how difficult. HOWEVER, without your support we simply cannot go on. We know they would like to see us fail. Please don't let them get their way.**

Please make all donations out to **Animal Investigations Europe**, mark your envelope fao:

**AIE**, Arkangel Magazine BCM 9240 LONDON WC1N 3XX

**Thank you for your support**

**AIE**

**Editor's note:** Readers wishing to read more about some of the above cases can find detailed accounts of the work undertaken by AIE's founder in Arkangels No 27 and 28. Please give your generous support to this essential work.



# LIBERATING OURSELVES AND THE OTHER ANIMALS FROM THE TIES OF CULTURAL TRADITION

*I think I could turn and live with animals,  
they are so placid and self-contained,  
I stand and look at them long and long.  
They do not sweat and whine about their condition,  
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,  
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God;  
Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania of owning things,  
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago,  
Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth.*

*Walt Whitman from Song of Myself*

**W**hy do elephants visit elephant graveyards, stay for days beside a dead calf trying to resuscitate it or rescue a baby hippo? Why have dolphins been known to save humans from drowning? Why does a dog pine when it loses a companion, or cower when it experiences what we would recognise as fear? Why should we presume that these examples are anything other than responses or expressions of feelings similar to ours experienced under similar circumstances? The answer to this question lies in the fact that if we collectively acknowledged that fear, joy, attachment, or the capacity for rational thought is not exclusive to our own species, then we would be morally obligated to abandon all the comforts that the lives of animals have provided us with for millennia. We would be obligated to consign all the Cartesian philosophies that help uphold the institutions of animal abuse to the waste bin. And that would be an inconvenience indeed...

What makes us successful (apparently) as a species is our ability to adapt, our flexibility. But therein also lies the paradox

– it is our refusal to accept that we need to change that makes us what we are – a danger to ourselves and our fragile planet. If we accept the anthropological view that we all come from the same rootstock, then the rest – the traditions, the religions, and our skin colour – are all survival responses to the situations or environments in which our ancestors found themselves. Viewed from that perspective, we can see that the traditions we cling to are window dressing. In the end, what defines us as human beings? Is it our culture, our colour, our genes, our environment? Or should it be something else? Isn't it what we do in the world that counts for something more ultimately?

OK. So what if we were to take ourselves stripped of everything? What are we? Without possessions, weapons and various back-up systems we are nothing but a puny, naked ape that would fare pretty badly out there where the wild things are.

Let's look at them. They build homes without hands using waste that nature provides them with. They don't use weapons of mass destruction to settle a borderland or territorial dispute.

They – the other animals – seem to have the business of life and death sussed. So how is it that we have moved so far from them that we have lost our sense of place in the scheme of things and live according to the self-deluded law of earth's bully-boy newcomer, Homo sapiens, who subscribes to the view that we are more important than anything else on our planet?

Some of our kind have chosen to take the view that all life forms are our brothers and sisters, albeit still adopting a stance of 'My life is more important than yours, so even though it's tough on you, I will take my gun/spear/hunting knife, track you down and kill you. And anyway, I like the taste of your flesh.' By taking this view, although their teachings are more in tune with the natural order of things, their view remains that of a supremacist. "...Perhaps the Punuk hunters (...) lived, some of them, exemplary lives. Perhaps they knew exactly what words to say to the whale so (...) they would not feel the weight of its death. I remember the face of the walrus we killed, and do not know what words to say to them. No culture has yet solved the dilemma each has faced with the growth of a conscious mind: how to live a moral and



*compassionate existence when one is fully aware of the blood, the horror inherent in all life, when one finds darkness not only in one's culture but within oneself."* (Barry Lopez, Arctic Dreams)

In his introduction to his book *Seven Arrows*, Hyemeyohsts Storm says: *If you or I were sitting in a circle of people on the prairie, and if I were then to place a painted drum or an eagle feather in the middle of this circle, each of us would perceive these objects differently... If the thing I were to place within our circle was an abstraction, such as an idea, a feeling or a philosophy, our perceptions of it would then be even more complicated...and further, the number of different perceptions of it would become greater...as more and more people were added to our circle.*

Based on this universal truth, one wonders whether we as a species could ever arrive at another mutually agreed universal truth as to the nature of what is morally acceptable in terms of how we treat non-human animals, given that we find inter-racial tolerance almost impossible!

The discussion of animals and their rights is always a highly charged one and one in which each faction believes that only their viewpoint has the balanced understanding of non-human animals' true place in the world. It presumes that one set of values is more important than another. Yet the very fact that we address these issues at all implies that we are doing so from a presumed perspective of superiority – a homocentric viewpoint if you like. Were we not arguing from this presumed perspective, we would be living with and among the animals in a true harmony, free from semantics and the shackles of tradition, civilisation, etc.

The moment *Homo sapiens* discovered fire and made the first hunting tool, our species took the first evolutionary steps of a journey that would increasingly separate it from the other life forms with which it walked the earth. Those societies that altered least and maintained a sustainable and balanced existence based on the exploitation of available natural resources (be they crops, wild animals, etc.) were also the ones to retain the purest connection to the Source, the purest understanding of animal life in the context of their importance relative to the survival of that human group. What that understanding did not encompass was the concept of the individual.

Animals clearly played a vital role in indigenous peoples' lives both as a food source and as a part of their oral, totemic and spiritual tradition, be it in story telling or in the shamanistic practices so central to many aboriginal societies. The tribal myths of many cultures were interwoven with allegorical tales about animals designed to teach and open the mind, revealing at the same time much about the essential nature of a given animal. What they also did was anthropomorphise, much as La Fontaine did in Aesop's fables to make a moral point or judgement. But in the very act of anthropomorphising, the story became a story no longer about the animal – the individuation of the animal – but about the human condition, thus denying the animal that individual importance in the scheme of things and simply using it as a convenient way to illustrate a point.

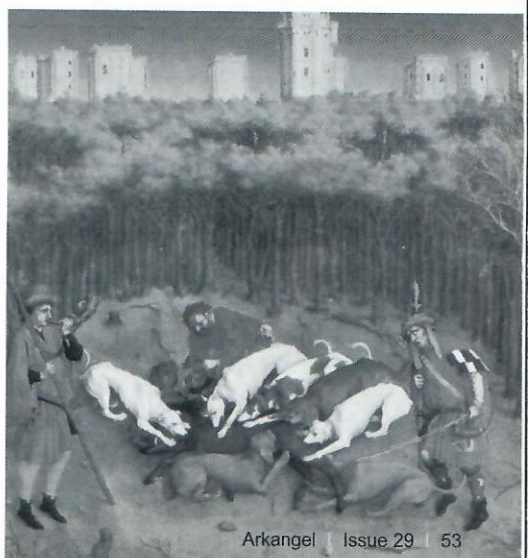
Some might argue that these stories show a reverence for and an understanding of animals. But understanding – or rather presuming – that we understand animals is surely as presumptuous as the missionaries who took it upon themselves to 'help' indigenous 'savages' around the world by effectively destroying their entire belief infrastructure and decimating entire Peoples.

It all goes back to that medicine wheel again, where everything is about perception. The only thing any of us can ever really know as fact is that all of us – the two legged, the four legged, the winged, the finned – all of us struggle to survive from one moment to the next, and all of us are speeding towards the same universal oblivion, regardless of creed, colour or species. That makes us all brothers and sisters in spirit; viewed from this perspective, culture and the trappings of tradition are essentially a veneer.

### TRUMP CARD OR RHETORIC?

The argument of cultural tradition is used to excuse outdated activities that revolve around having some form of pleasure around the killing or consumption of an animal. The world has changed so much that there should no longer be any need for a single person to be forced to cling to the ways of their forebears.

*Forms of government are seldom the results of much deliberation; they are framed by chance in popular assemblies, or in conquered countries by despotic authority. Laws are often occasional, often capricious, made always by a few,*





*and sometimes by a single voice. Nations have changed their characters; slavery is now no more patiently endured, than in countries once inhabited by the zealots of liberty. But national characters can arise only from general agreement; they are not imposed, but chosen, and are continued only by the continuance of their cause. (Samuel Johnson, The Idler, January 13 1759)*

So what defines tradition? The generally accepted view is that it is the handing down from generation to generation of the same customs, beliefs, etc., especially by word of mouth. But here's a thought...

A young girl asks her mother why she always cuts off a chicken's legs before putting it in the oven. Her mother's reply is that her mother before her always did it like that – it was traditional. Dissatisfied with the answer, the girl goes to her grandmother and asks the same question, only to be given the same reply. She approaches her elderly great-grandmother and gets the same response once again. Well, this family is renowned for its longevity, so pretty soon she's gone as far back as the very first great-grandmother a zillion times removed and asks the selfsame question, expecting some life-changing spiritual revelation. The answer: Because it was the only way I could fit it into the oven...

This aptly illustrates two points: that cultural tradition may be based on a custom that originally had a practical application. It also illustrates the importance of looking into the heart of things, because they are not always what they seem. Just because something has been done a certain way for centuries or even aeons doesn't always make it right. Look at female infibulation, for example. How much suffering has that caused for hundreds of years in the name of tradition? And why? To ensure that the young woman's male marriage partner has a tight fit during sexual intercourse even though it deprives the woman her sexual pleasure forever, causes immense physical pain and suffering, and even death. And those who perform the operation are the elder women of the tribes... Tradition. We should never accept things without question. These things still go on in the world today, but like the barbaric practice of foot binding in Japan, which was also about the subjugation of woman as object, woman as weak and defenceless (and what better way to weaken a subject than by

disabling their ability to walk?), they will eventually be consigned to the vaults of history along with every other conceivable barbaric practice.

How are the traditions to which all cultures cling integrally important to that peoples' cultural longevity? In what way can the consumption of a turkey at Christmas in a European country, the ritual hunting and killing of a whale by indigenous peoples in Alaska, the halal slaughter of a sheep in Islam, the annual bull-run in Spain, etc., have any true value in ensuring the survival of a cultural tradition? The list of these traditions is long, and we find that many of them are to do with the consumption, killing or subjugation of an animal. It seems to me that, as inherently symbolic of the rest of the natural world from which we have divorced ourselves, animals are a means by which we express our imagined supremacy over nature. The God complex if you like.

The question that needs to be addressed here is whether the fear of looking into the heart of these traditions is relevant to the equation. Every child should question the value judgements and traditions brought to them by their parents and grandparents and beyond. In doing so, they do not risk losing the infrastructure or spirituality which guides their national or group spirit, but they are making an informed choice about the suitability of those structures in today's changing world, just as people have always done. Had they not, we would probably still be living the way of early Cro Magnon humans.

Sati in India is now considered a crime, a barbaric cultural tradition that has no place in the world, yet for centuries it was viewed as culturally acceptable to throw a widow onto the burning funeral pyre of her deceased husband. As views change about human rights and wrongs, it is possible to believe that there is room for engaging in dialogue with all cultures on the issue of animal exploitation. We have clearly demonstrated in past Arkangels that spirituality remains unthreatened by the act of becoming a vegan, whether one is a Muslim, Jew, Pagan, Christian, etc. The same should be possible for all peoples, even those coming from a hunter/gatherer tradition who have lives most closely linked to the cycles of nature, the movement of herds, etc.

We could all sit back and say that this or that tradition is one that should be maintained because it has been a part of

x, y or z's cultural tradition for hundreds of years. Isaac Bashevis Singer lived through the holocaust. The years of genocide experienced by his people meant that they clung to their cultural traditions as a mainstay for their Jewishness, yet he didn't think it was necessary to be a meat eater to uphold his essential Jewishness.

Tradition may not necessarily revolve around the subsistence hunting/killing that some believe is an integral part of, say, various aboriginal peoples, but it is considered relative in its importance to x, y or z's cultural tradition. One person may argue that their case is different or unique because of its historical perspective – but why should the latter have any bearing on the case of animal rights? The two subjects are surely not mutually exclusive? As animal rights supporters, surely we cannot support an exclusion zone for cultural traditions as some might argue? Many devoutly spiritual people from diverse cultural traditions have reinterpreted their relevant sacred texts and teachings to include compassion for other animals – God's creation – rejecting the long standing interpretations of those traditions. They have not been struck down by Allah or God.

We live in a world that has changed beyond recognition since the Industrial Revolution. Countries no longer have the same boundaries, and there is a free exchange of influence across the continents. The gradual loss or erosion of cultural individuality is an inevitable part of that process as the adaptation continues. Many of us have rejected the traditions of our countries while staying true to our cultural roots. Those animal rights people, still able to enjoy Christmas, do so with a new version of the culinary tradition while maintaining the essence of what was originally a pagan tradition later adapted by the Christian faith. Muslims can celebrate the teachings of their faith while remaining true to their belief in a compassionate way of living. And Jews can remain true to their faith without ever letting flesh or animal by-products pass their lips.

Where do we draw the line about what is ethical and right – morally right, that is? In the end, arguments regarding cultural practices involving animal exploitation, which are excused and informed by cultural tradition, will end up just as species-centred as any other, no matter what the semantics.



*'That the most brutal of instincts should be the source of all civilization will not seem a paradox to anyone who understands what life is' (George Santayana in Dominations and Powers).* Casting blame on those who have wronged you over the centuries does not entitle any peoples to an out clause. Their subjugation and exploitation – usually by the Western world – is the continuation of an ugly tradition in the history of our species and its power to dominate over the weakest of its kind as well as the rest of the animate world. Why would one want to perpetuate that cycle of domination over other life forms when so many peoples in recent history have been victimised and controlled by a dominant force? These people were not given a choice, and yet they cannot see that they perpetuate that selfsame cycle by not giving a choice to the animals that are exploited to uphold some obsolete tradition.

So where and when did the killing start? We know it's always the meekest of animals – the herbivores – that have provided the staple meat source in most cultures. Their meat is the tenderest, and they are generally easier to catch. But why did it start? Clearly, until *Homo sapiens* discovered fire, followed by the earliest weapons, s/he would not have stood a chance as a mere naked ape against any adversary in the animal kingdom. Any meat they did come by was probably rare and simply the spoil from an animal killing or a natural death. So the discovery of these two things coupled with the ability to adapt allowed this species to gradually gain supremacy and dominion and reach the shambles of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in which we find ourselves today.

The animal rights movement as it is now is still young and trying to forge an identity and a philosophy that embraces more than just the pivotal concept of ensuring that the other animals have rights equal to ours to live and die, not as slaves but as free beings not subjected to suffering and exploitation by a species that considers itself superior. Superior is as superior does, and let's face it – it's not the other animals that are always screwing up! The philosophy of 'animal rights' is one that embraces a respect for all life. Without that completeness, it won't just be the animals that don't stand a chance – it will be us as well and this fragile planet which actually we ALL share.

In this respect, Chief Seattle's classic oration holds as true today as it did 150 years ago when it was first delivered: *What is man without the beasts? If the beasts were gone, man would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected. This we know. The earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood which unites one family. All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.*

**“ As views  
change about  
human rights  
and wrongs, it is  
possible to  
believe that  
there is room for  
engaging in  
dialogue with all  
cultures on the  
issue of animal  
exploitation. ”**

So where is all this going? Well, it's about attempting to establish dialogues, about communicating and learning. It's about finding that place in people's hearts – whatever their cultural background or tradition – where they begin to feel remorse for their actions. Where they actually begin to see and to believe that there is another and better way to exist, and that their world won't come crumbling down around them. That in fact their lives will become fuller and more enriched in the knowledge that they are actually helping to shape a new

order while maintaining their ethnic and cultural identity. Remorse. The first stage towards making a choice about the way we want the world to be. The ability to change and adapt has been our species' greatest strength; it is what will determine whether or not we, our fellow creatures and the rest of the planet survive. The inability or refusal to accept that, in the long run, the slash-and-burn mentality cannot ensure the survival of our own species (let alone all the other life forms with which, like it or not, our destinies are interwoven). It is simply unsustainable and will be our downfall. If we can open up to *"the possibility that nature has a degree of authenticity and intelligence that requires us to look at it more sensitively, then we can move to the next step (...): to incorporate the other people – what the Sioux Indians called the creeping people, and the standing people, and the flying people, and the swimming people – into the councils of government."* (Gary Snyder in *"The Language of the Birds"*)

#### DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR

The fact of the matter is that the 'Is now and ever shall be' philosophy can't co-exist in the real world. The world we inhabit is constantly changing, in perpetual motion both metaphorically and physically as it rotates around the sun along with the rest of the planets of our solar system. Swept up in this perpetual motion, our species-centred microcosm is powerless to stop change or progress, as we would call it. Every culture desperately clings to the traditions they believe give them the stamp of uniqueness, yet the destruction of cultures and traditions has been a feature of human history for thousands of years – it is part of the cycle of domination and subjugation that is a feature of our species, and a reflection of the mutability of all things. Nothing remains fixed and unyielding. As we are swept by the tide of 'progress' to become some sort of homogenised species, who is to say that through that homogenisation we will not learn to live as one people as we once did, mindful and respectful of each other's cultural backgrounds, yet unfettered by the narrow traditions that imprison us in the very cycle that perpetuates animal abuse.



# YOU'VE PROVED YOU'RE USELESS !!

## HEADS YOU'RE RIGHT, TAILS YOU'RE WRONG

**M**edia watching is a tedious business. Research a programme or article on animal experiments and it comes back to the same old preconceptions. It's not a nice business, but those egg-heads reluctantly have no choice if they're going to make progress. The alternatives do some things, but they're not quite as good. Against this background, in a nation where well over 90% of the population eats meat and we can't even get a ban on fox hunting, can we really expect to make serious progress while views like this are unchallenged?

The truth is that not all newspaper editors are entirely biased. Many are prepared to print hard evidence of the medical failure if it's well presented and well argued. They may well, for social/business reasons, mix more with the vivisection-industry employees than the anti-vivisectionists, but the main problem is that the other side are better organised, and their well-established misnomer needs a large effort to overturn it.

So what is the evidence and how does the lab animal measure up to 'alternative methods'? To give animal experiments the chance they don't deserve, we're not going to compare them against cutting edge medical technology of the 21st century, or even against basic medical science. We're going to compare vivisection with an unscientific method we don't recommend - the coin flip. Heads it's a safe drug that works, tails we ditch it. Against this we have data from animal experiments which can be directly compared to human results, giving an accurate assessment of how reliable animal methods are, and showing their rate of failure.

### CANCER

Nineteen chemicals known to cause oral cancer in humans were studied in animals. Using the standard National Cancer Institute Protocol, and rats and mice, twelve were found to be safe in animals<sup>[1]</sup>. This is a failure rate of 63%, compared with flipping a coin, which would fail around 50% of the time. In terms of human safety, it means over half of the dangerous chemicals and drugs screened in this way, get approved. As if to underline this failure, around the same time, an experiment was done using twenty compounds known not to cause cancer in humans. Nineteen did cause

cancer in the laboratory animal<sup>[2]</sup>, a failure rate of 95%. 2-0 to the coin flipper.

Seeing results like these anger people who are repeatedly told that 'alternatives' to animal experiments are not permitted until they've been 'validated'. A common reaction is that no-one ever tried to validate animal experiments - and if they did they'd fail, but this isn't entirely true. They would fail, but they have tried.

In 1983 Pfizer used rats and mice to test all the chemicals they could find which they knew to cause human cancer. The failure rate was incredibly poor: 63% of carcinogens passed the tests, and the experimenters themselves concluded that they would have been better off to have tossed a coin<sup>[3]</sup>. The species difference is enormous, a problem that no-one can get past. "In monkeys none of the power carcinogens [to humans] has been shown to produce cancers" was a conclusion in *The Lancet*<sup>[4]</sup>. Considering the relatively close relationship between monkeys and humans, compared with rodents and humans, continuing with rats' screening programmes is open to ridicule. In fact the evidence shows that rat screening would still be ridiculous even for identifying what's dangerous to mice. Experiments on rats and mice show that 46% of chemicals which caused cancer in rats, were not cancer-inducing in mice. Mice were found to develop cancer, due to exposure to chemicals which did not affect rats<sup>[5]</sup>. With a background like this, can we still seriously be expected to believe rats and mice are relevant to human cancer, when they're not even relevant to each other?

The same is true of using animals to develop new cancer drugs - a favourite argument of the person who knows nothing of science or the historical facts, but will argue an indefensible point based on a vague impression. Hoping animal methods might be tried and found useful ignores some salient points: they have been tried and are not useful. Between 1970 and 1985, 500,000 different chemicals were tried on animals in an attempt to find some which would combat cancer. This massive, enormously expensive operation identified eighty drugs, most of which were useless in humans. Only twelve did have some value. So does the discovery of these twelve mean the millions spent were worthwhile?

All twelve were so similar in structure to existing treatments, that they could all have been identified by chemists, more quickly, at a fraction of the cost, without any animal use<sup>[6]</sup>. The project was a success only in delaying discovery and wasting money. It may also have indicated as useless some vitally important treatments.

National Cancer Institute (USA) had a similar project lasting 25 years, which tested 40,000 plant species for anti-cancer effects. All chemicals identified by the animal tests were either ineffective or too highly poisonous to be used in humans<sup>[7]</sup>. Even the *Handbook of Laboratory Animal Science* admitted: "despite 25 years of intensive research and positive results in animal models, not a single anti-tumour drug emerged from this work."<sup>[8]</sup> Work which cost millions.

The species difference has proved insurmountable, despite ingenious attempts by vivisectors to involve animals somehow in their experiments. All it does is invalidate the experiment. One experiment involved trying drugs known to affect human cancers, on human cancers implanted in mice. 63% of these drugs failed. Involving a different species in an experiment brings too many differences to make the attempt worthwhile.

Someone who would put the failure rate at 100% is Irwin Bross, formerly of the Roswell Park Memorial Institute for Cancer Research: "...while conflicting animal results have often delayed and hampered advances in the war on cancer, they have never produced a single substantial advance in either the prevention or treatment of human cancer."<sup>[9]</sup>

Similarly, Thomas E Wagner, a long-serving cancer research specialist says: "God knows we've cured mice of all sorts of tumours. But that isn't medical research."<sup>[10]</sup> Dr Richard Klausner, National Cancer Institute agrees: "We have cured mice of cancer for decades, and it simply didn't work in humans."<sup>[11]</sup> Pioneer of research into polio, Albert Sabin joins in: "Giving cancer to laboratory animals has not and will not help us to understand the disease or to treat those persons suffering from it."<sup>[12]</sup>



## DRUG TESTING

Welcome back our typical vivisection supporter who knows enough about science to write it all on the back of a postage stamp. With this level of knowledge it is easy to support the idea of 'trying it on animal first, to see if it's alright.' Apart from the fact that some side effects are undetectable (headaches, depression, blurred vision) this might seem practical. A group of vivisectionists ignored the undetectable side effects and tried to detect the side effects they knew humans were getting from a group of drugs, in dogs or rats.

Of the 78 side effects, 54% were nowhere to be seen in the animals <sup>[13]</sup>. Again, flipping the coin was more accurate. But at least the method predicted some of the side effects - so we can find some of them from animal testing. Before this leap of faith, consider the evaluation that was done on 45 drugs to determine whether the side effects predicted by animal experiments actually happen in humans. The discovery was that most did not. 75% of the side effects predicted by animal studies did not happen in humans <sup>[14]</sup>.

According to Dr Ralph Heywood, the 75% failure rate was as good as they could have got from animal tests. As Scientific Executive of Huntingdon Research Centre (now Huntingdon Life Sciences), he estimated that: "...the best guess for the correlation of adverse reactions in man and animal toxicity data is somewhere between 5% and 25%" <sup>[15]</sup>; admitting they are therefore wrong in between 75% and 95% of cases. Are failure rates like these supposed to be science? No wonder the study of all drugs released in the USA over ten years found that 52% were withdrawn or relabelled due to unforeseen side effects. <sup>[16]</sup>

Unsurprisingly, drugs which work on animals don't work in humans any better than those selected by chance. Eleven out of twelve (92%) fail at the very first stage of clinical trials. <sup>[17]</sup> An example is the research into stroke drugs over the ten years to 1988 which uncovered twenty five drugs which worked in animals. None worked in humans <sup>[18]</sup> (100% failure), which was unsurprising given that no animal gets stroke like humans do.

## BIRTH DEFECTS

Out of fear and desperation, the threat of children being born limbless, eyeless or in some other way damaged leads some people to support tests on animals. The threat of more maimed children, unable to lead normal lives, is naturally emotive. But far from a reason for more animal experiments, the seriousness and extent of birth deformities is, to an extent, attributable to animal experiments.

Thalidomide was safe in all pregnant species. Disputes over whether it was

tested on pregnant animals before release are irrelevant: the tests were done afterwards and they proved incapable of predicting the human catastrophes. The failure led to increasing the dose, doubling it, then further increases. At anything less than ten times the dose there were no defects at all. <sup>[19]</sup> The failure rate of the animal tests here has to be a clear 100%.

Again, animal experiments have been assessed for this vital area of medical research. In identifying drugs known to harm the unborn human baby, monkeys fail in 70% of cases <sup>[20]</sup>, far worse than the coin flipping. As with drug side effects, the birth defects which are detected in lab animals are pointless data, because it happens so often and is found to be wrong. Animal testing has a reputation for 'crying wolf', and anyone who ignores adverse results found in the animal lab has good reason to do so.

Over 1,200 chemicals have been identified to cause birth defects in lab animals, yet only 30 cause birth defects in humans. Many useful drugs are indicated dangerous in animals but are safe in humans, including aspirin and insulin. <sup>[21]</sup> This is a failure rate of over 97%. <sup>[22]</sup> This isn't science, it's a recipe for disaster.

Animals are - and have been - used to establish safety for human drugs. The evidence is clear in that they are worse than useless, so their use may have been catastrophic. Human birth defects rates are rocketing. In 1948 they were around 3 per 100,000 live births, <sup>[23]</sup> The Lancet in 1999 gave figures equating to a rate of over 800 per 100,000 in the UK. <sup>[24]</sup> The official figure for the UK for 2001 registered 1170 serious birth defects per 100,000 live births. <sup>[25]</sup>

The use of animal screening programmes has led to animal tested drugs as the first suspect. This lead was taken by doctors investigating the phenomena, who concluded that "for 61% of all malformed children born alive and 88% of all stillborn children the intake of various drugs had to be held responsible." <sup>[26]</sup>

## COULD WE DO ANY WORSE THAN VIVISECTION?

A common mistake made is that animal experiments have a vague, imperfect level of accuracy for human medicine. This vagueness is used as an argument both for and against vivisection. In truth the level of accuracy is much easier to estimate, as experimental results where the level of coincidence between human and animal reaction are available. This result is so appallingly low that red herring methods such as flipping coins do actually have a higher level of accuracy. This damning truth makes it incredibly hard to argue in support of continued animal experiments for human medicine.

These results also give us priceless ammunition with which to defeat the vague claims made by the ignorant and the financially involved. Next time someone tries telling you that animal tests, although imperfect, give a reasonable indicator of the result in humans, ask them to estimate the percentage accuracy. Then explain that Ralph Heywood, someone who built his career on vivisection and still works in the field, estimates this to be 5-25%, and watch the jaws drop. Statistics such as the above make the idea of animal experiments for human benefit a completely untenable concept.

Not only are the human-centred arguments against vivisection more relevant to many pro-vivisectionists' points of view, they are also more conclusive. Their use is therefore indispensable and at a basic level at least should be in the mental arsenal of anyone who considers abolition to be worthy or even the smallest effort.

Vivisection Information Network (VIN),  
P O Box 223, Camberley, Surrey,  
GU16 5ZU. [vivisectionkills@hotmail.com](mailto:vivisectionkills@hotmail.com).  
Recommended website:  
[vivisection-absurd.org.uk](http://vivisection-absurd.org.uk).

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# APPEAL FOR HELP FOR STRUGGLING SANCTUARY

**T**he Retreat Animal Rescue about which we wrote in Arkangel No 25 is under increasing financial pressure to make ends meet as the number of animals in its care multiplies.

The original response to the Arkangel appeal was favourable, but we now ask

that people dig deeper into their pockets. It is a sad reality that people – even those in the movement who should know better – who burden The Retreat with more and more animals seldom help cover the escalating costs of veterinary care or feed which Billy Thompson is forced to try to cover by doing three jobs, thus taking him

away from what he is best at: the hands on care of the animals. Anyone who has seen how he adores his charges and how they adore him in their turn will appreciate this.

There are currently 200 plus animals at The Retreat; 100 of these are a mixture of larger animals, namely horses, sheep, goats, pigs and cows. The remainder are 16 dogs, as well as 12 in kennels looking for good homes; cats, ferrets, ducks, rabbits, guinea pigs and chickens make up the rest. We would like to point out that a recent request by a caller to help rescue 500 chickens from a closing down battery unit ended with Billy having to foot the £200 bill to buy the birds as well as housing them all until he could find an alternative home for them. There are now 150 left to re-home.

The weekly running costs for the retreat are a basic £600. Veterinary bills are on top of this figure, which regularly reach £3,000 upwards, often for the treatment of a single large farm animal. Damage to the property by thieves has meant finding £500 a hit for the replacement of the



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sanctuary gates, which have been smashed three times in as many months. Without help, Billy's efforts to make a difference are in serious jeopardy. He desperately needs support and a show of solidarity from the people that are supposed to care. Please be among those who do!

In an attempt to generate some much-needed cash for The Retreat, we are asking that readers adopt one or more of a handful of animals at the sanctuary, some of which are shown here.

**1 Parsnip with her lamb, born into freedom**

**2 Loppy, an unwanted buck rabbit, abandoned at a local pet shop**

**3 Prince, a blind pony found in the canal in East London**

**4 Thomas, Merlin and Oswald, shown here on the day they were rescued from slaughter**

**5 Sebastian and Billy, two goats that had been kept as pets rescued from slaughter**

**6 Martha, handed into RSPCA as an unwanted pet**

For more information:  
[www.retreatanimals.net](http://www.retreatanimals.net). Regular fundraising events take place. Fun and frolic is had by all.







*Acts of injustice done*

*Between the setting and the rising sun*

*In history lie like bones, each one*

**WH Auden, The Ascent of F. 6**